Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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LD161350 [Editorial Report]

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Capture of Khurmal—Iranian forces "completely liberated" the northern Iraqi border town of Khurmal 16 March in a new offensive entitled "Val-Fajr-10," IRNA announced. The agency said the attackers also captured 21 surrounding villages in a 250 sq km area, inflicting over 1,000 casualties and taking some 500 Iraqi prisoners.

Missile, Air Attacks—The missile exchange continued 15-16 March, with Iraq launching seven at Tehran while Iran fired five at Baghdad and nine at targets near Basra. One of the Iraqi missiles was fired the afternoon of 15 March, and six more were fired the following day, according to military statements broadcast by Voice of the Masses radio. A communique carried by the radio expressed Iraq's determination to transform Tehran into an "inferno." For Iran's part, IRNA stated that the attacks on Baghdad and the Basra area were in retaliation for Iraqi air raids on Iranian cities. The agency said 52 civilians were killed in Iraqi missile and air attacks early 16 March, while Tehran radio reported that air attacks the previous day killed at least 81 people, including 25 students and teachers at a school in Alashtar.

Iraqi statements carried by Voice of the Masses had announced eight more air strikes on Iran 15 March, as well as a raid on a large maritime target. The targets included the Emam Hasan oil fields, a television transmission station near Taheri, and the cities of Rasht, Borujerd, Orumiyeh, and Dezful. Iranian jets struck at Iraqi targets in the Faqqeh, Al-'Amarah, Irbil, Kirkuk, and Khurmal regions 16 March, according to IRNA.

Israel

Two more Arabs were killed and four wounded during a "very tense" day in the territories, Jerusalem television reported, noting that the IDF is investigating the circumstances of the deaths. Three of the injured were shot during clashes with the IDF in Qalqilyah, which was closed to the media, Jerusalem radio disclosed. Jewish settlers had earlier stoned Arab homes in Qalqilyah in retaliation for a mass riot in the town, according to MA'ARIV. IDF radio spoke of increasing "ferment" among Jewish settlers, who have petitioned the defense minister to stop legal proceedings against four soldiers accused of torturing Arabs in Nabulus.

In other developments, the Civilian Administration cut direct telephone links between the territories and foreign countries in order to prevent PLO members in Europe from sending messages to residents, Jerusalem radio reported. The Israeli authorities are also continuing to withhold fuel supplies to Arab-owned gas stations, imposing restrictions on residents of the territories wishing to travel abroad, and maintaining the overnight curfew in Gaza. The Arabs of "Judaea and Samaria" observed a general strike throughout 15 March, the radio noted.

A U.S. photographer working for THE VILLAGE VOICE has left Israel after being charged with participating in a violent disturbance in Nabulus on 8 March, Jerusalem radio disclosed. The man was allegedly seen throwing stones at Israeli soldiers.

PLO, Syria on Shultz Plan

Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf stated that the Shultz plan contains "some positive elements," though he added that a Syrian-Jordanian-Palestinian committee must study the plan to define the negative and positive elements in it, Radio Monte Carlo reported. Khalaf's remarks contrast with previous PLO statements condemning the plan in its entirety.

During talks with the French foreign minister in Paris, Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' expressed Syria's "reservations" about the U.S. proposals, the radio noted, but he explained that Syria will not announce its position on the Shultz plan until Israel has adopted a final position.

Afghanistan: Geneva Talks

A Soviet Government statement published in IZVESTIYA 16 March declared: "It is absolutely clear that if the signing of the agreements is delayed, the beginning of the Soviet troop withdrawal will also be postponed." The statement criticized Pakistan and the United States for raising conditions that have "absolutely nothing to do with the Geneva accords" and which "attempt to dictate" the character of Soviet-Afghan relations. "Farfetched pretexts and demands" have brought the talks to a "virtual standstill," the statement charged.

An Afghan Government statement carried by Kabul radio called on Pakistan to focus on the original aim of a "political settlement of foreign aspects of the problem" and to abandon its efforts to link the signing of a Geneva accord with the formation of a transitional government in Kabul. "Pakistan has lost the historical chance of establishing normal relations with Afghanistan," the Afghan statement declared.

In Geneva, UN mediator Diego Cordovez noted that the negotiations are encountering "extremely difficult problems," AFP reported. Zain Noorani, head of the Pakistan delegation, observed to journalists that "some progress" was made in the negotiations, Islamabad radio reported 16 March. Noorani opined that, considering the preparations already made for their withdrawal, Soviet troops do not need a full 60-day period before the pullout can begin.

Iran-Saudi Arabia

In a "strongly-worded communique" reported by IRNA, Mohammad Khatami, Iranian minister of culture and guidance, asserted that demonstrations against "unbelievers and ungodly powers" enhance the spirituality of the hajj, and he charged that the Saudi Goverment not only promotes an "American brand of Islam" but is also trying to exclude Iranian pilgrims from the hajj by not granting them entry visas.

Sudan

Government Program Proposed—Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi announced to the Sudanese Constituent Assembly that if it does not approve his proposed government program within 3 days, he will resign, and a new government will have to be formed, SUNA reported. The program which Al-Mahdi presented to the Assembly includes draft legislation to replace laws enacted under the Numayri administration as well as provisions for convening a constitutional convention, reforming election procedures, and correcting "institutional" deficiencies.

Agreement for Tripartite Meeting—Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Miriam has accepted Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's proposal of a tripartite meeting with Premier al-Mahdi, according to an AL-USBU' report cited by SUNA. The paper added that Mengistu had thanked Mubarak for his efforts to mediate a reconciliation between Sudan and Ethiopia.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Shultz Said To Aid Syrian-Lebanese Dialogue

PM151459 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 9-15 Mar 88 p 8

[Unattributed report: "U.S. Mediation Transcends Tripartite Agreement on Indirect Negotiations Between Beirut and Damascus"]

[Excerpt] The U.S. Administration is mediating between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Lebanese President Amin al-Jumayyil via the U.S. secretary of state's mission and within the framework of the two visits he made to Damascus over the last 2 weeks, a major part of which was devoted to discussing the Lebanese crisis.

Information available about these talks indicates that the Syrian authorities had requested U.S. diplomats to obtain written details from President al-Jumayyil on his concepts and visualization of a political solution. These ideas were conveyed to Damascus. They were discussed with Lebanese opposition elements, including Prime Minister Salim al-Huss and Ministers Nabih Birri and Walid Junblatt, as well as Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni. They recorded reservations about Al-Jumayyil's proposals, not totally rejecting them, so sources say, but rather complementing some points to make them valid as a basis for new negotiations.

Political sources in Beirut say that the Syrian demarche in obtaining written proposals from Al-Jumayyil is considered a breach of the tripartite agreement signed among the conflicting Lebanese militias in late 1985, which the Lebanese president did not approve. The Syrian authorities' new attitude, as considered by Lebanese sources, disregards that agreement and features resumed contacts, albeit indirectly via U.S. mediation, between the lawful authorities in both countries. [passage omitted]

UN Arab Group Backs Kuwaiti Assembly Proposal

LD150929 Kuwait KUNA in English 0825 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] United Nations, March 15 (KUNA)—The Arab group has backed a Kuwaiti proposal calling for the participation of all General Assembly members and observers in the work of its plenary and various panels. The proposal would be included in a resolution to be tabled when the General Assembly resumes its 42nd session, probably on Friday, to take up the U.S.-ordered closing of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's observer mission. The Kuwaiti proposal, which Ambassador Muhammad A. Abu al-Hasan said won the unanimous support at Monday's Arab group meeting, does not mention by name the PLO or any other group. The purpose was to win wide support for the draft in the Assembly which on March 12 said the U.S. move was a violation of the Headquarters Agreement and international law. Only Israel voted against that resolution, while the United States did not participate in the vote.

"The General Assembly should reaffirm once again that all its meetings and those of its various committees take place in the presence of all its members, observers and invitees," Abu al-Hasan said. He said the Arab group's current chairman, Ahmed Ghazal, would inform a meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference Wednesday what the Arab group had decided with regard to the reconvening of the session. Abu al-Hasan said the resolution would ask the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion. It would also include the Kuwaiti proposal adopted by the Arab group.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat on Arab Summit, 'Uprising,' UN Mission

LD132245 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Text] During the visit of the brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and commander in chief of the Palestine Revolution Forces to Algeria, he was interviewed by the correspondent of the Voice of Palestine Radio. The correspondent conducted with Brother Abu 'Ammar a lengthy and comprehensive interview in which brother leader Abu 'Ammar spoke about all current issues—Palestinian, Arab, and international.

Today we present to you the first part of this interview.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] Brother leader Abu 'Ammar, you are now visiting Algeria shortly after Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid announced the Algerian initiative—the Algerian president called for convening an emergency Arab summit to discuss the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories in light of the escalation of violence in the popular uprising there. Until now, some Arab states have agreed to the convening of this summit. I wonder, what is the reason for the delay in all Arab states approving the convening of the summit and when do you expect this summit to be convened? In the event of its being convened, what does the PLO want from such a summit?

[Abu 'Ammar] Practically, the invitation has assumed its official form. You know that the Arab League has some official procedures which should be followed and therefore the invitation was considered official after brother President Chadli Bendjedid sent a special envoy to Tunis where he met Chedli Klibi, brother secretary general of the Arab League. I had a lengthy meeting with President Bendjedid. We agreed to activate this issue officially according to the procedures and regulations of the Arab League. Until now and in the last few days—4 days alone—seven Arab states have responded.

Within the next 7-10 days we expect there will be the required legal number which will make it possible to call for a convening of the forthcoming emergency Arab summit in accordance with the call voiced by brother President Chadli Bendjedid. We consider this call to be at this time an important declaration and appeal at the Arab nation's level and with regard to the important and serious political events being witnessed by our Arab nation on the one hand and the Palestinian issue on the other.

The emergency summit will be held to discuss the means for escalating the popular uprising of our people inside our occupied territories and the reflections of this blessed uprising, not only at the Palestinian level but also at Arab and international levels and even at the level of our Israeli enemy, and (?in view of this strong) U.S. hostility. It appears that the present U.S. Administration under President Reagan has nothing to preoccupy itself with except to continue its relentless war against the Palestinian people, the Palestinian revolution, and the PLO—the leader of the struggle of the Palestinian people.

The decision issued yesterday by Attorney General Edwin Meese to our office saying that 21 March will be the last day of our mission to the United Nations has come at the same time when the U.S. delegate to the United Nations—who belongs to the U.S. State Department—submitted another serious letter asking for the termination of the activities of the PLO mission in the international organization. This exposes the clear and absurd ploy which the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Presidency, the Justice Department, and the U.S. Congress together participated in. This also reveals that the whole thing is nothing but a conspiracy against the Palestinian people and the PLO, and more than that, against the United Nations. It clearly and (?categorically) reveals this U.S. attitude which totally disregards all international agreements. [passage indistinct].

We hope that all the Arab leaders will respond to this pan-Arab appeal by brother President Chadli Bendjedid, which found a good and positive response from all the Palestinian people and the masses of our Arab nation, out of their awareness of the importance of this initiative at this precise time to stand by the Palestinian people. Therefore, I expect and hope this extraordinary summit will be held as quickly as possible; we hope 1 April will be a suitable time for holding this summit before the next U.S. moves with the third round of visits by Shultz.

[Correspondent] Brother Abu 'Ammar, you have just referred to the new conspiratorial step of the U.S. Administration by closing down the headquarters of the PLO mission to the United Nations. What has the Palestinian revolution leadership—the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people—prepared to confront this new conspiracy on the Palestinian, Arab, and international levels?

[Abu 'Ammar] Some brothers and friends asked us to file a suit. We said: No, we are not the side to file a suit. The side which should file a suit is the United Nations, because [this measure] is not directed against us as a mission only, but is directed against the agreements and charters signed between the No 1 international organization in the world and the U.S. Administration. We called, as you know, for an extraordinary meeting of the UN General Assembly. This was held. It proved how isolated the United States and its partner—Israel—are, even from their own allies, as 143 voted while 1 vote—Israel—was with the United States. Even the United States' friends voted against it at this meeting as all condemned this unethical attitude which exposes the ugly face of the U.S. Administration, which even humiliated the U.S. people themselves and their international commitments.

At the same time, the question has now been referred to the Hague Court. We will follow up the issue once again either at the UN General Assembly—another emergency meeting—or at the UN Security Council. We are conducting consultations with a number of brothers and friends within the United Nations and outside it to confront this new conspiracy by the U.S. Administration against the PLO, the United Nations, and against international norms and charters.

[Correspondent] Within the conspiracy which is being carried out by the U.S. Administration against our Palestinian people, our cause, revolution, and our people's aspirations for freedom, independence, and the establishment of our independent Palestinian state, Shultz came to the region; he was preceded by envoys and followed by envoys...

[Abu 'Ammar, interrupting] He will return again.

[Correspondent] And will return, as you have just said. What did Shultz carry in his bag when he toured the region during the first and second phases of his tour and how do you explain Israel's policy of playing hard to get, as the Israeli media is trying to show there is an Israeli rejection of the Shultz initiative?

[Abu 'Ammar] Why should Israel not play hard to get? Israel does not wage the battle. The United States is the one which is waging the battle against us. The United States uses the guard dog—which Israel and this Israeli military clique represents—against the Palestinian people and against the Arab nation. We should understand that Israel is the bayonet point of U.S. policy in the Middle East. We should not be deceived. However, I would like to say something. In 1982 Reagan and Begin thought if they used the Israeli army they would put an end to the PLO in 1-2 days; they charged Sharon and Alexander Haig—then secretary of state who is now nominating himself in the presidential elections and who wants to become the new President of the United States in the new presidential market, the new slavery market—with the task.

Both Sharon and Haig laid down a plan for liquidating the PLO and demolishing the PLO infrastructure, as they put it, and liquidating the Palestinian question. Sharon thought he would do it in 2-3 days' time. But what happened? It was the longest Arab-Israeli war. Correct? It lasted 88 days. Not only this; it was also the most successful war of attrition—from 1982 until now, as it is continuing in southern Lebanon.

Today there were two air raids—two Israeli air formations raided our people, our camps, our strugglers, and our revolutionaries. We suffered two martyrs and tens of wounded. I know they will repeat this. The air and naval raids and shelling will not stop in southern Lebanon. The battles will not cease in southern Lebanon. Nevertheless, the PLO did not end. The blessed events inside our occupied territories and this blessed revolutionary uprising by our women, children, men, students, workers, farmers—the people in all their factions and all their ideologies from A to Z, all the ideologies represented within the Palestine National Council, from the extreme right to the extreme left, from the Communists to the Islamic movements—all of them are today united against this enemy and against the Israeli occupation.

Our people are now replying twofold, saying to Reagan and to the U.S. Administration and to Shamir, Peres, and Rabin that there is (?a people). Our people are today rewriting history in glittering letters. Once again the Palestinian question is occupying its natural and important place in events—not only Palestinian or Arab but international events. [end recording]

[Announcer] We will present the second part of the interview tomorrow.

2d Part of Interview

LD150016 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1702 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Second part of interview with Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and commander in chief of the Palestine Revolution Forces, identified by his nom de guerre Abu 'Ammar, by an unidentified Voice of Palestine radio correspondent; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Question] Brother Abu 'Ammar, in the context of the continuing conspiracy being implemented by the U.S. Administration against our Palestinian people, our cause, and our revolution, and, of course, against the aspirations of our people for freedom, independence, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, Shultz came to the region. He was preceded and followed by envoys, and as you say, he will return again to the region. So, what was Shultz carrying in his bag when he toured the region on the first and second leg of his tour? And how do you interpret this Israeli capriciousness, as the Israeli media have indicated that Israel has rejected Shultz' initiative?

[Abu 'Ammar] In fact, Israel does not wage the battle; it is the United States which wages the battle against us, using Israel and the Israeli military junta as a guard dog against the Palestinian people and the Arab nation. We must understand that Israel is a bridgehead and a spearhead for U.S. policy in the Middle East. So let us not delude ourselves. In 1982—have you forgotten or is your memory failing you—Reagan and Begin thought that by moving the Israeli army they would finish the PLO in 1 or 2 days. They entrusted Sharon and Alexander Haig, the secretary of state, who is now running for President in the new elections...[sentence incomplete]

This Alexander Haig and Sharon laid down a plan to, as they said, to strike at the infrastructure of the PLO and liquidate the Palestinian cause. Sharon thought he could do that in 2 or 3 days. What happened when? The longest Arab-Israeli war—88 days. Right? Not only that, the most successful war of attrition has been going on in southern Lebanon since 1982, despite the massacres. And today there were two air raids launched by two Israeli formations against our families, our camps, our militants and our revolutionaries in eastern Sidon. There were 2 martyrs and 10 injured. I know they will do it again because the air and naval raids and the shelling never stopped against southern Lebanon.

Despite all this, the PLO is not finished. Look at the blessed events taking place inside our occupied land and this blessed revolutionary uprising staged by our women, our children, our men, our students, our workers, our peasants, our craftsmen, the landowners, the shopkeepers, the lawyers, the doctors, the engineers, the graduates, the university lecturers, all the people, all sections and all currents, from one end to the other, all the ideological currents represented in the Palestinian National Council, from the extreme left to the extreme right, from the Communists to the Islamic movements; all these are now in the same front against this enemy and against Israeli occupation.

Our people return the greeting and give two blows for one and I say to Reagan, to the U.S. Administration, to Shamir, Peres, and Rabin: Watch it, there is a resolute people and our people are today rewriting history with letters of light. The Palestinian cause has retaken its natural, essential, and important position in the course of events, not only Palestinian or Arab events, but also international events. Therefore, let us remind them that we shall fight them as long as it is necessary.

How can you forget? You must remember these things and you must know that these generals, the ones I have named—the generals of the stones, along with the generals of the rocket-propelled grenades—these are the sons of the revolution. They have been brought up by the revolution and they have lived in the midst of the revolution. They have also been reared in the climate of the revolution and they now make the events in the climate of the revolution. These new generals force the rewriting of history with a Palestinian dialect, based on Palestinian facts and the Arab future.

Everyone must understand that this number is the (?rising) number in the Middle East equation. We are not tired; those who are tired should rest. Do you remember when I used to tell you: Those who are tired should send me their children. These children are now coming of their own volition. And now we can continue on the road with them. It is not only the children. They have been followed by the women and the men followed the women. The nation now groups children, women, and men. This is the Palestinian miracle. I say before the Palestinians: Vengeance.

We must all remember as much as possible and every woman and every man should remember Sabra and Shatila. Sabra, on 300 by 400 meters, stood fast for 3 years despite the shelling, the deaths, the hunger, the starvation, and the imposed thirst until the inhabitants were compelled to eat human flesh. Therefore, every Palestinian says that if Sabra and Shatila stood fast for 3 years, how long will the West Bank and Gaza stand fast? We will fight for as long as it takes.

[Question] Brother 'Ammar, despite the clarity of the events taking place in the occupied land, the clarity of our people's goals and the clarity of the outlook in the region as a whole, and despite also the clarity of the conspiracy which Shultz carried with him not only against our people but also against our Arab nation, press, political and diplomatic circles have said unanimously that Shultz found approval and acceptance in the Arab capitals which he visited with regard to the initiative he was carrying with him. What is your opinion?

[Abu 'Ammar] What is the use? Did he not say he came to resolve the Palestinian problem? Whether in our favor or to our detriment. The truth is he came to resolve it to our detriment because he came to contain the uprising. If he does not want to deal with the Palestinians and the Palestinians do not want to deal with him, then with whom will he resolve the problem? [indistinct words] (?He said) no to the right for self-determination of the Palestinian people with 5.25 million Palestinians. For your information, there is an abundant number of children, may God preserve them. [words indistinct]

No to an independent Palestinian delegation at the international conference, no to an effective international conference, and no to the PLO. What did he come for then? He came for self rule. I wish it were self rule; no, he came for self administration [preceding word in English], to be ruled by a condominium [preceding word in English]. What is a condominium? Whoever is ready to accept 2 piasters with Reagan's blessing comes to rule the Palestinians with the Israelis in a condominium. What is the objective? [words indistinct] Going away [preceding words in English], meaning that Israel moves away from the densely populated areas, that is, the Israeli army moving away from the densely populated areas to strategic military positions to enable the Israeli army to strike at the right time.

There have been 168 martyrs, over 5,000 injured, and over 9,000 detainees so far. If those men of the Dimona operation had managed to enter Dimona, we would have obtained the release of the 9,000 detainees. Never mind, we will repeat the operation. We are a resolute people. [words indistinct] This is what Shultz is against. Thus the importance of the call made by the brother President Chadli Bendjedid because this call says to the Arab states and the Arab rulers: Come and assume your responsibilities.

We want to see where people have got to. They tried in Amman, had they not? In Amman, they used the term flexibility [preceding word in English], adopted by some people, and we are tired of this word, to satisfy the United States. That meant there is no need for the Rabat and Fes resolutions. That is what they said. What happened then? Thank God, we came out unscathed and with this stand some of the Arab brother leaders... [incomplete sentence] And indeed some of them threatened, including the brother President Chadli Bendjedid, President Saddam, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, and others, saying they did not approve what was going on.

The important thing that is happening now is that they are twisting and turning. Had you not approved in Fes a program called the Fahd plan? Had you not committed yourselves to it as Arabs or not? Or is there something public and something secret? Hence the importance of the call made by the brother President Chadli Bendjedid. We will oppose them for as long as it takes.

[Question] Let us now talk about the occupied land....

[Abu 'Ammar, interrupting] And we tell Rabin that the queston is who is going to resist the longest? Has he not seen Sabra and Shatila standing fast for 3 years. Three hundred by four hundred meters only and it stood fast for 3 years despite the daily pounding with all kinds of bombs. Does he not know that? And four massacres in Sabra and Shatila and they stood fast for 3 years. It seems he knows nothing about history. Send him a few books on history, he might learn.

It seems Rabin is ignorant in history; we must send him a few books on history as a gift, through one of the foreign embassies, in France or anywhere else. Send him a few books. Let him know there is a resolute people against him, who is against the current of history. Our people, our revolution, and our movement follow the current of history, that is why they will triumph. When the Algerian revolution was encircled, the Algerian people came out for 1 and 1/2 years [as heard] [words indistinct].

[Question] Let us now talk about our people. Indeed, they will impose a solution and this is for sure. And let us also talk about our great uprising blessed in every Palestinian village, camp, and town in the Palestinian Bank, the Gaza Strip, and even in the areas usurped in 1948. This uprising—which upset all the calculations of the enemies and also of the agents and those revolving in their orbit. One journalist commented on the outbreak of the Palestinian popular uprising inside the occupied territories by saying: The seed was planted in good soil and now the seed has started to grow—this was 2 days ago; the uprising continued and entered its 4th month.

[Abu 'Ammar, interrupting]...This is the 4th month. They say the recent wave was in the 4th month. The operation of these recent waves started from the time Sabra and Shatila were encircled.

[Question] Yes. But in this new wave, the embryo is 4 months old, therefore it cannot be aborted, and it has 9 months left, after which the Palestinian independent state will be born. What is your commentary on this? Is he extremely optimistic...

[Abu 'Ammar, interrupting] I do not want to be very specific, but I would like to say that we have come to the last quarter of the hour. God willing, our flag will be hoisted, and in return you must know that the most distinguished battle occurs in the last quarter of the hour. From individual assassinations, the abortion of women—and as you see, over 250 women were aborted—to the political conspiracies, the secret wheeling and dealing, and the escalation. [as heard] Our revolution is being stepped up and in return we must understand that the others are also stepping up their repression. We must understand that the iron fist policy is being stepped up.

Therefore, and although we have come to the last quarter of the hour, we must however tell our people: You must keep all your political, revolutionary, and popular awareness and all the incentives must be before us and all our mental faculties must be intact, because the most difficult battles occur in the last quarter of the hour.

[Question] Is there one simple word or a specific message you would like to address to the masses of our Palestinian people, to the children, the women, the elderly, the men, and the youth?

[Abu 'Ammar] I will tell them one word: We are on time for a very close rendezvous. We have come to the break of dawn and our rendezvous is for the morning. Together, side by side, we will remain until victory, until victory, until victory.

And to enter the temple as they entered it the first time-...God bought from the believers their souls and their possessions against the gift of Paradise: they fight in the way of God; they kill and are killed; that is a promise binding upon God in the Torah, and the Gospel, and the Koran; and who fulfills his covenant truer than God? So rejoice in the bargain you have made with him. [Koranic verse]

The guardians of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the guardians of the [words indistinct] on this sacred land. The prophecy will come true and the young people will hoist the Palestinian flag over the walls of Jerusalem.

[Correspondent] Thank you, Brother 'Ammar.

Yasir 'Arafat Holds Algiers News Conference

*JN152018 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic
1733 GMT 15 Mar 88*

["Text" of news conference by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Algiers on 14 March "in the presence of PFLP Secretary General George Habash and DFLP Secretary Nayif Hawatimah"—read by announcer]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Question] How do you assess the U.S. position in light of Shultz' plan and do you expect Israeli military strikes on Palestinian positions outside the occupied territories?

[Answer] First, regarding Shamir's position, we can say it is a new Israeli blackmail against the U.S. Administration just as Begin blackmailed U.S. policy to secure the Camp David Accords as a first step of a large-scale Israeli blackmail to achieve the new Camp David against the Palestinian people and the Arab nation. Now we see that before the arrival of Shamir, the U.S. Administration wanted to give him a gift for his crimes against the Palestinian people and the PLO by closing our PLO mission at the United Nations under the U.S. attorney general's decision.

By doing this, the United States has ignored all the international charters, norms, and agreements between the U.S. Administration and the largest international organization. Shamir's intransigence and Peres' apparent flexibility are only roles being shared by both of them on one hand and the U.S. Administration on the other. The main Israeli-U.S. goal is to control and contain the uprising of our people regardless of the means they have to use. But they should know—I say this in the presence of my brothers in the Palestinian leadership, my brother George Habash and Brother Nayif Hawatimah—that there is a Palestinian decision from the top to the smallest child that this popular uprising will continue until the Israeli occupation ends and an independent Palestinian state is established. This is our decision regardless of all the Israeli attempts and the continuous U.S. maneuvers.

Regarding the second point on Israeli operations outside the occupied homeland, I can say they are being carried out through air and naval raids, which have begun against Palestinian camps and Lebanese villages and cities in southern Lebanon. The latest raids were the two air raids on the Palestinian camps near Sidon, as well as the other crimes being prepared against Palestinian leaders outside the occupied homeland. We have information about this plan, including attempts by the Mosad against targets in Europe to confuse European public opinion which sympathizes with the Palestinian revolution and people.

[Question] When and where do you believe the Arab summit will be held and what do you say about Shultz' meeting with a Palestinian delegation?

[Answer] Shultz has refused to meet with a Palestinian delegation. Such a meeting was scheduled to take place in Cairo. Shultz wanted to meet with a delegation of his own choice during his presence inside our occupied homeland. The Palestinian people will refuse to allow the U.S. Administration to choose the Palestinian delegation it wants to meet. We will choose the Palestinian delegation that will meet with the U.S. Administration or any other international official. We do not want to name the U.S. delegation. Similarly, the U.S. Administration should know it cannot name the Palestinian delegation.

Nine Arab countries have agreed to attend the Arab summit. When more than half of the Arab countries agree, the Arab summit should convene. We hope the quorum will be complete within 1 week. There are also some proposals regarding the venue of the conference. However, it will be held in Tunisia or any other Arab country that agrees to host the conference. This is one of the points we discussed with brother President Chadli Bendjedid during our meeting with him yesterday. We hope the conference will be held in early April.

[Question] The economic situation is deteriorating in the occupied territory. Do you think the Arab countries have fulfilled their financial commitments to the PLO and the people in the occupied territory so they may continue the escalation of the uprising to achieve the right to self-determination? How do you assess the escalation in the Iraq-Iran war, particularly the recent cities' war on the course of the uprising in the occupied territory and to what extent does the war affect the uprising?

[Answer] I want to say there is an Arab support, but slow and below the required standard. We do not deny some forms of the support which have reached the Palestinian people, the PLO, and the uprising. The PLO has only received the installment paid by the brothers in Saudi Arabia.

I want to speak to you about some responsibilities. We spend between $72 and $75 million per year on our martyrs and prisoners. We spend approximately $16 million per year on medical institutions, including the Palestinian Red Cresent. I do not want to speak about our expenses inside the occupied territory nor about our political and military expenses so you will know the size of the PLO's expenditures and responsibilities. [passage omitted]

[Question] What do you expect from the Arab summit?

[Answer] We expect support for the popular revolutionary uprising of our masses inside the occupied territory so they can use all available means to escalate this uprising against the Israeli occupation. We also expect that all Arab weight will be placed in support of the Palestinian people and the leadership of the Palestinian people, the PLO. The important thing is to reiterate the resolutions of the previous Arab summits to confront the American-Israeli schemes against the Palestinian people. There are five American noes against the Palestinian people: No to our right to self-determination; no to an independent Palestinian state; no to an independent Palestinian delegation to the international conference; but yes to a ceremonial international conference; and no to the PLO.

Therefore, the Arab nation is called upon to reiterate its resolutions on the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as well as the previous Arab summits' resolutions on the Palestinain right to repatriation, to self-determination, and to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. This was decided by Arab resolutions; UN resolutions, including the UN General Assembly's resolutions; the OAU, Nonaligned, and ICO summits; and our friends in the socialist countries, particularly the USSR and the PRC. Even the EC countries talk about an effective international conerence, the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, and the presence of the PLO at an international conference.

[Question] What about the Al-Asad-King Husayn meeting and their agreement?

[Answer] I have no knowledge about a Syrian-Jordanian agreement on this point. [passage omitted]

[Question] With regard to Shultz' plan, how does the PLO accept the formula of a joint delegation? What is the Arab stand on the closure of the PLO office?

[Answer] The formula of the joint delegation ended with the abrogation of the Jordanian-Palestinian accord. We say an independent Palestinian delegation. This was announced by our PNC.

With regard to the second question, this will be discussed in two coming meetings. On 29 [March] there will be a meeting of the seven-member committee and on 29 [March] evening, there will be a meeting of the Arab League Council on the level of foreign ministers. Then, there is an extraordinary summit, which will be held next month. One of the basic points will be the Palestinian issue. This is an important point because it concerns the Palestinian issue, the Palestinian people, and the entire Arab nation. [passage omitted]

Brother Nayif Hawatimah then spoke. He said: A last word, the developments in the uprising of our people in the occupied territory were on the agenda of our meeting today in the talks of the Palestinian leadership. The comprehensive popular uprising has entered a new stage after Call No 9 and Call No 10 issued by the Unified National Leadership inside the occupied territory.

The Unified National Leadership is the political and struggling arm of the PLO. Now, the tools of the occupation established in the occupied Palestinian territory—the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza—throughout the years of the occupation are now collapsing under the pressure of the uprising. In accordance with the call of the Unified National Leadership, the overwhelming majority of the police have resigned. The majority of tax collectors have also resigned. The nets of agents, formed by the occupation during the past 20 years, are being dissolved. This shows the authority of the occupation and its tools in the occupied territory are collapsing under the earthquake and blows of the uprising. The municipal and village councils appointed by the Zionist occupation are resigning under the pressure of the uprising.

This shows that the tools on which the occupation has relied as a mediator between the occupation and the people of the uprising are today collapsing. Meanwhile, PLO authority is now being reinforced on the ground inside occupied Palestine. The people are the people of the uprising, within the framework of the Unified National Command and the national and popular committees run by the Unified Leadership, which is exercising their its. This means the collapse of all American, Israeli, and defeatist Arab attempts to create alternatives to the PLO.

The call of the Unified Leadership in the occupied territory said through 2 million Palestinians: No to the Shultz plan. The PLO is the leader of the Palestinian people.

Brother Dr George Habash also spoke at the press conference. He said: Our word during this uprising is a united one. In accordance with Brother Abu 'Ammar's request, I want to say that during our talks we discussed all attempts to be embarked upon by the enemy camp—the Israeli-imperialist camp—to destroy and abort the uprising. This is among the most important issues facing us. Our eyes should always be open to these issues. Israel has been trying to uproot this uprising by force. As it said, Israel will use all methods to end the uprising. I say this so our eyes will always been open to know the immense efforts needed so the uprising will triumph and achieve its objectives. Israel is also fabricating statements in the name of this or that political force to create confusion among our masses, the masses of the uprising. What is more dangerous than the Israeli repressive attempts are the cunning U.S. political maneuvers embarked on by the U.S. Administration. Last month, we saw an example of these attempts. I mean Shultz' attempt to meet with Palestinian personalities away from the PLO. Our people, the people of the uprising, the PLO, and its leadership, were able to foil this attempt. The U.S. Administration's attempts will not stop here. At the beginning, Philip Habib came first, then Murphy, and then Shultz who came twice. Matters will not stop at this point. The important thing is that as we succeeded in foiling the U.S. attempts until this point, it is also important that we succeed in our attempts so the uprising will succeed.

Here emerges the mission of the PLO and its leadership—that is, to provide political protection for the uprising. If we succeed in confronting the repression carried out by the Israeli leadership and if we succeed in aborting and confronting all the U.S. Administration's maneuvers and attempts, the uprising will achieve victory and all its objectives, God willing, thank you.

Brother leader Abu 'Ammar concluded the press conference by saying: At the end, I salute the fraternal Algerian people, who have always said we are with Palestine in all cases. I thank the Algerian people, the people of the 1 and 1/2 million martyrs, for this revolutionary stand with their Palestinian brothers and for their donations and support. My greetings to the Algerian leadership, particularly, the brother President Chedli Benjedid. I say: Together until victory. Jerusalem will be liberated, God willing.

Khalaf Says Shultz Plan Has 'Positive Elements'

JN152030 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
2000 GMT 15 Mar 88

[From the "Panorama" program]

[Text] Awaiting the final results of the Israeli-U.S.talks in Washington, Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] has made an important statement in Tunis. Abu Iyad says that George Shultz' plan contains some positive elements, but it is necessary for a Syrian-Jordanian-Palestinian committee to study this plan to define the negative and positive elements in it.

He added: We say this despite the fact Shultz did not propose anything to us in our capacity as Palestinians. Abu Iyad says Shultz' plan ignores the PLO and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. Abu Iyad wonders: If Shamir rejects this plan, this will simply mean he is against any settlement and that peace with him is impossible.

South Asian Regional Affairs

Gorbachev, Cordovez Comment on Afghan Talks

AU151320 Paris AFP in English 1316 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Geneva, March 15 (AFP)—Crucial Afghan peace talks here have run up against "extremely difficult problems," U.N. mediator Diego Cordovez said here Tuesday. He said there remained "questions on the instruments to be solved and other questions we are talking about." He did not elaborate, but was believed to be referring notably to Pakistani demands for the formation of a broad-based interim government in Kabul prior to a pullout of the estimated 115,000 Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

Meanwhile in Belgrade, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was quoted as telling Yugoslav officials late Monday that "no timetable" had yet been set for a Soviet troop withdrawal. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vadim Loginov on Tuesday quoted Mr. Gorbachev as saying: "If there is an agreement on March 15, we will begin withdrawing our troops."

"At that time we will still have to determine the pace at which (the withdrawal) will be carried out," Mr. Gorbachev was quoted as adding.)

Mr. Cordovez also rejected criticism that he had been seeking a "quick agreement but a superficial one."

"Everybody is looking for a sound agreement... we continue to negotiate, to look for a solution," he stressed. He said the March 15 date was an important date for the Soviet Union, "but a deadline must be accepted by both sides... this does not apply to the present situation."

Pakistan's Noorani on Interim Government

BK151616 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Pakistan has affirmed that it will not delay signing the Geneva accord on Afghanistan for even a single day—if doubts about some points are removed. These points are believed to be related to the establishment of a transitional government in Afghanistan simultaneous with the halt of military aid both to the Kabul regime by the Soviet Union and to the mujahidin by the United States. Radio Pakistan's special representative, Safdar Ahad, said in a dispatch from Geneva that some points in all four instruments remain unresolved and it may take several days to resolve them.

Pakistani delegation leader Zain Noorani told newsmen in Geneva today that Pakistan wants to see the beginning of a process to set up a broad-based transitional government in Kabul, including talks between Afghans, so that a transitional government will assume power when the troop withdrawal from Afghanistan begins. He said that the process of establishing a transitional government in Kabul should begin now and should continue even after the signing of the accord. However, the process should be completed as soon as possible, he added. He said that the question of signing the accord has been separated from the issue of establishing a transitional government in Kabul. However, this is only one problem, and action is needed on the [words indistinct].

According to AFP, a list of seven or eight points has been formulated. These are related to the drafts of three of the four instruments and other changes. According to the agency, the modalities of signing the third instrument—on guarantees to be made by the United States and the Soviet Union to implement a comprehensive agreement restoring peace in Afghanistan—are yet to settled. This instrument will be signed by the UN secretary general as well.

The UN representative on Afghanistan, Diego Cordovez, has said we are holding serious talks and all of the parties would like to see a concrete settlement, not an irresponsible, fragile one arrived at in a hurried manner. He told newsmen we are facing an extremely difficult situation and are engaged in negotiations on extremely difficult issues. He said we are constantly trying to resolve the issues and are committed to settling these issues and signing the agreement. Cordovez said the difficult issue of a timetable has been resolved, but other questions still exist. There are some other questions on which talks are continuing and we will have to allow time for that. Zain Noorani is expected to meet Cordovez, along with his delegation, sometime this evening.

The Soviet Foreign Ministry official in charge of Afghan affairs, (Nikolay Khezrov), met with Cordovez this morning. After the meeting, when newsmen asked him about the nature of the meeting and whether there has been any significant progress on the Geneva peace agreement, Khezrov said that talks are continuing.

'Some Progress' Achieved

BK160255 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Zain Noorani, the Pakistani delegation leader at the Geneva proximity talks on Afghanistan, has said that some progress was achieved in the negotiations yesterday. Talking to newsmen after 2 hours of indirect talks, he expressed the hope that progress would also be made on other problems, such as the formation of an interim government in Kabul acceptable to all groups of Afghans. The Pakistani delegation leader said Pakistan will persevere in its efforts to help resolve the two remaining issues, the formation of a transitional government in Afghanistan and the simultaneous end of Soviet military aid to the Kabul regime and U.S. assistance to the mujahidin.

Replying to a question on when the Afghanistan problem would be resolved and an agreement signed, Zain Noorani said this would depend on all the parties concerned. Answering another question, the Pakistani delegation leader said he did not think it necessary to postpone the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. The Soviet Union has been saying that its troops have begun preparations for their withdrawal from Afghanistan. Under these circumstances, a 60-day period is not required for preparing for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, Zain Noorani observed.

When asked by newsmen about the significance of 15 March as the last date for the signing of the Afghan accord, Diego Cordovez, the United Nations envoy on Afghanistan, said it is certainly a significant date for the Soviet Union because they set it. However, a single date must be acceptable to both sides at the talks. He does not think that it is applicable to the Geneva proximity talks, Cordovez added.

Algeria

Malian President Arrives for Visit 13 Mar

LD131309 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Excerpt] At the invitation of President Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Republic and secretary of the FLN Party, Moussa Traore, secretary general of the Democratic Union of the Malian People and president of the Republic of Mali, has begun a 2-day visit to Algeria. [passage omitted]

Meets Bendjedid, Comments

LD141250 Algiers APS in English 1032 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Algiers, 14 March (APS)—Tete-a-tete political talks were held Sunday evening here between President Chadli Bendjedid and Malian President Moussa Traore, who arrived Sunday for a two-day working visit at the invitation of President Chadli Bendjedid. Soon after his arrival, the Malian head of state told the press that "I came here in order to examine with President Chadli Bendjedid the preparation of the forthcoming summit conference of the African unity".

Meets Palestinian Leaders

LD141257 Algiers APS in English 1018 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Algiers, 14 March (APS)—Malian President, Moussa Traore, who is currently paying a two-day working visit to Algeria, audienced Monday here the chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, Yasir 'Arafat, the secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Nayif Hawatimah and the secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), George Habash. The Palestinian leaders arrived here yesterday.

Last Round of Talks Held

LD142140 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Excerpt] We open our second bulletin with the cooperation which characterizes the working visit made by Malian President Moussa Traore to Algeria, which began yesterday. The Algerian and Malian delegations held the last round of political talks at Jinan al-Mithaq villa this morning under the chairmanship of Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Republic and secretary general of the FLN, and Moussa Traore, secretary general of the Democratic Union of the Malian People and president of Mali. [passage omitted]

News Conference, Departure

LD150239 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Moussa Traore, president of the Republic of Mali and secretary general of the Democratic Union of the Malian People, left Algiers today after a 2-day working visit at the invitation of President Chadli Benjedid, president of the Republic and general secretary of the FLN. The Malian president was seen off at Houari Boumedienne International Airport by President Chadli Benjedid and members of the Political Bureau and government, ambassadors of the two countries, the doyen of the diplomatic corps, and African ambassadors to Algeria.

Before boarding the presidential plane, President Traore listened to the national anthems of the two countries and reviewed a company of the Republican Guard. President Moussa Traore told the press:

[Traore in French with superimposed Arabic translation] [Begin recording] Cooperation between Algeria and Mali is considered exemplary at the political level. It has been decided to promote economic cooperation to the level of political cooperation. For the sake of achieving this we have decided to strengthen the link between Goa and Tamanrasset, through the highway that links these two towns, and to set up a factory to bottle Algerian gas in Mali, which will markedly reduce wood burning in our country and help us to combat the advance of the desert. [end recording]

Regarding trade, the president of Mali said that exchange will soon be bolstered as a result of setting up mixed economic companies. In the African arena, President Traore explained that he discussed the Western Sahara issue in his conversation with President Benjedid. In this respect, he recalled an initiative started by the OAU a few years ago in cooperation with the UN.

Concerning the Libyan-Chad conflict, President Traore expressed his conviction that the conference of states of the OAU special committee on this conflict, which is due to convene in Dakar, Senegal, will help to reduce the hotbeds of tension on our continent.

Concerning the Iraq-Iran war, the Malian president said: We wish for an end to this war, which has shed a great deal of Muslim blood, and we believe that Muslims need harmony in their work more than bloodshed. Traore, who received Palestinian leaders, noted that the meeting dealt with the situation in the occupied areas. Before he concluded his statement, the Malian president insisted that he repeat his thanks for the warm welcome accorded him.

Bendjedid Receives Al-Qadhdhafi Message
LD131132 Algiers APS in English 1051 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Text] Algiers, 13/3/88 (APS)—President Chadli Bendjedid audienced on Saturday Sa'd Mujbir, secretary of the Libyan Arab Fraternity Bureau in Algiers who transmitted to him a message from Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, head of the Libyan revolution.

Ibrahimi Cables Nonaligned, OAU Chairmen
LD141021 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 0630 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Foreign Minister Dr Taleb Ahmed Ibrahimi, in his capacity as chairman of the Seven-Man Arab Committee of the Arab League, has sent cables to Nathan Shamuyarira, Zimbabwe's minister of foreign affairs, who currently chairs the Nonaligned Movement, and to Luke Mwananshiku, Zambia's minister of foreign affairs, who currently chairs the OAU.

In the two cables Dr Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi tackled developments in the popular uprising in the Arab occupied territories and its political aspects, stressing the need for greater solidarity from the nonaligned countries and the OAU for the just cause of the Palestinian people.

Foreign Minister Receives Greek Official
LD141110 Algiers APS in English 1008 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Algiers, 14 March (APS)—Foreign Minister Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi audienced Sunday here the executive secretary [title as received] of the Greek Foreign Ministry, Konstandinos Yeoryiou, who is in Algiers since Saturday in the frame of regular political consultations between the two countries. During talks held on this occasion, the two sides dealt with belateral relations and topical political questions. Moreover, the executive secretary of the Algerian Foreign Ministry [title as received], Ismail Hamdani and Yeoryiou chaired a working session held between members of the two delegations, during this session, they examined propsects of bilateral cooperation and relations. They also exchanged views and analyses on the international political situation, particularly on the developments of the situation prevailing in the Middle East in light of the uprising of the Palestinian people in occupied territories, the Iraq-Iran conflict and the main problems affecting the African Continent.

Chad

Habre Leaves for Gabon Party Anniversary

Accompanying Delegation Noted
AB112120 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 11 Mar 88

[Excerpt] The president of the Republic, El Hadj Hissein Habre, left Ndjamena this morning for Libreville where he will take part in the festivities marking the 20th anniversary of the Gabonese Democratic Party, PDG [Gabonese Democratic Party]. The head of state was invited by the Gabonese head of state, El Hadj Omar Bongo. Several personalities including members of the Consultative Council of the Central Committee of the UNIR [National Union for Independence and Revolution] have accompanied the head of state to the Gabonese capital. They are:

Mohamat Senoussi Khatir, minister of health; Wadal Abdel-Kader Kamougue, minister of agriculture; Kassire Delwa Coumakoye, minister of public works, housing, and town planning; Hassan Djamous, commander-in-chief of the Chadian National Armed Forces; [name indistinct], vice president of the National Consultative Council; Mahamat Nouri, member of the Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of the UNIR and commissioner in charge of external relations; Mrs Fatime Kimto, member of the Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of the UNIR; [name indistinct] of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Promotion of Women; (Gambet Hassan), director at the presidency; (Ado Matiner), director general of [words indistinct]; and (Issa Mistgoye), director of the presidential press. This visit will reinforce relations between the PDG and the UNIR. [passage omitted]

Views Fete, Conflict with Libya
AB132048 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 13 mar 88

[Excerpts] The president of the Republic, El Hadj Hissein Habre, this morning departed from the Libreville Leon Mba International Airport. Just before his departure, the head of state granted an interview to Gabonese Television. El Hadj Hissein Habre first of all expressed his sentiments on the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the PDG.

[Begin recording] [Words indistinct] thank President El Hadj Omar Bongo, founding chairman of the PDG, militants of the PDG, the government, and the entire people of Gabon for the warm (?reception given to) my delegation. We witnessed the celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of the PDG, and were able to see the role that the PDG has played in the unity and the economic, social, and cultural development of Gabon. [passage omitted]

We were certainly impressed by the festivities marking the 20th anniversary of the PDG. We at the UNIR [National Union for Independence and Revolution—FBIS] have a lot of lessons to draw from the experience of the PDG. [end recording]

The OAU ad hoc committee, as you know, has proposed that a preliminary meeting between President Hissein Habre and Colonel al-Qadhdhafi take place before the Dakar meeting next April. In regards to the OAU ad hoc committee's proposition, the head of state pointed out that any initiative aimed at resolving the dispute between Chad and Libya would be welcome, and that Chad is ready to cooperate closely with the pan-African organization. Here are the remarks El Hadj Hissein Habre's made before the cameras of the Gabonese television:

[Begin recording] Any initiative for the settlement of the Chad-Libya dispute is welcome. We have always supported the efforts and actions of President Bongo in this direction. Chad, as you know, is ready to promote and participate in any efforts for the settlement of this conflict. [end recording]

Returns 13 Mar

AB142019 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Excerpt] President Hissein Habre returned to Ndjamena yesterday from Libreville in Gabon where he participated 12 March in the activities marking the 20th anniversary of the Gabonese Democratic Party [PDG]. The large scale of Chadian participation in these festivities shows the excellent relations that exist between the PDG and our national movement, the National Union for Independence and Revolution [UNIR]. While in Libreville, the founding chairman said that he appreciated the progress the PDG has made in 20 years, and that UNIR had a lot to learn from the PDG's experience. [passage omitted]

Habre Receives Saudi Envoy Mas'ud, Fahd Message

AB092156 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 9 Mar 88

[Excerpt] This morning President El Hadj Hissein Habre received a Saudi envoy, Minister of State Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, who came to deliver a message from Saudi Arabia's King Fahd. The envoy held talks with the president of the Republic that lasted over 1 hour and 30 minutes. These talks enabled the head of state and the Saudi envoy to review relations between Riyadh and Ndjamena. [passage omitted]

Sudan's Leadership Criticized on Darfur Affair

AB121643 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 11 Mar 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] The Darfur Province in Sudan has, over the past few days, become a base for Libyan military operations against Chad. The Sudanese authorities, after an initial hesitation, finally admitted the truth under pressure from the events and Sudanese public opinion. However, the Sudanese official reaction has remained lukewarm.

In admitting to the Libyan presence in the Darfur Province, Sudanese Interior Minister Sayyid Ahmad al-Husayn has only joined the Sudanese people who have become increasingly fed up with the behavior of a foreign force on their soil. However, in contrast to their minister, who merely admitted this presence, the Sudanese people mobilized to denounce it. Their hostility toward this situation can mainly be seen through national newspapers.

It was in this regard that the students from the Darfur Province met in Khartoum. They called on their representatives at the Sudanese Parliament to resign and to set up a united front against the Libyans in the region. The newspaper, AL-AYYAM of 24 February, which announced this news, also asserted that almost 3,000 elements of the Libyan regular army and of the Islamic Legion are stationed in the Darfur Region. On its part, (ATENEGRA) in its 27 February issue, stated that there is no security in that part of the country as a result of the current Libyan maneuvers. On this same note, (ALUISBUK) wrote that the World Food Program has threatened to stop its activities in the area of Sudan that borders Chad due to the prevailing insecurity resulting from the Libyan military activities. The same newspaper has also written that [words indistinct] has revealed the signing of a Libyan-Sudanese agreement, whereby Sudan has granted to Libya military facilities in the Darfur Province.

Even though the presence of the Libyan troops in that region has been clearly demonstrated, these reports enable us to realize the seriousness of the situation and to stress the adverse consequences this can have on the future of Chad-Sudan relations. What attracts people's attention here is not the Sudanese people's reaction. Rather, it is the absence of responsible reactions from the Sudanese authorities in the face of a potentially explosive situation.

Because the Sudanese authorities have demonstrated a lukewarm attitude toward diffusing the tension, Chad has no other alternative than to deal unilaterally with the threat that comes from the Sudanese eastern province, regardless of the consequences this may have on the peace and especially the tranquility of the Sudanese people in the region.

Briefs

FRG Envoy Departs

Today the FRG ambassador to Chad, His Excellency Dr Hilmar Kaht, was decorated by head of state Hissein Habre. The decoration ceremony, which took place at the presidency, was in recognition of the exceptional services the ambassador rendered to Chad. The ambassador is at the end of his tour. [Summary] [*Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 10 Mar 88 AB*]

Egypt

AL-AHRAR Expects Government Reshuffle

PM151313 Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 7 Mar 88 p 1

[Salah al-'Anani report: "Cabinet Reshuffle Within Next Few Weeks"]

[Text] AL-AHRAR has learned that a cabinet reshuffle will take place within the next few weeks. At their meeting with President Mubarak at the National Democratic Party Political Club the day before yesterday, NDP deputies expressed their rejection of the present government's policy on tackling economic and development problems. The deputies said that the government has not succeeded in relieving the people's suffering.

Mubarak Denies 'Rumors'

PM151507 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 9-15 Mar 88 p9

[Unattributed report: "Mubarak Meets With Officers and Refutes Rumors"]

[Text] At his meeting [place, date unspecified] with Army officers, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak was eager to reply to all rumors now circulating in Egypt that a reshuffling of Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi's government is imminent, parliament is to be dissolved, and new elections are to be held this year. Mubarak denied that there is any intention to reshuffle the cabinet in the near future or to dissolve parliament, thus closing the door on such rumors as well as political and press speculations.

It has been noticed that President Mubarak hastened to hold a meeting with Army officers after the announcement of the bill of indictment involving the Egypt's Revolution Organization, in view of the fact that the organization includes some military men. The meeting replies to rumors about discontent within Egyptian Army circles as a result of the announcement of the bill of indictment concerning this case.

Al-Baz on Arab League, Gulf War, PLO, IMF

JN142016 Al-Dammam AL-YAWM in Arabic 13 Mar 88 p 13

[Interview with Dr Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and head of President Mubarak's Office for Political Affairs, by Yusuf al-Harmi in Doha—date not given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Al-Harmi] What about Egypt's return to the Arab League? Was this issue discussed during President Mubarak's recent tour of GCC countries? Also, what about the return of the Arab League to Cairo?

[Al-Baz] President Mubarak and the Arab leaders did not discuss this issue. The most important issue is the resumption of normal relations with the fraternal Arab countries. The question of the return of Egypt to the Arab League or the latter's return to its headquarters in Cairo is of secondary importance, following the resumption of relations with all the Arab countries. Relations between Egypt and the fraternal Arab countries are relations of the same fate; the Arab League is the vehicle through which the Arab countries organize their moves, whether on the regional or international level. It is the framework within which the Arab countries' objectives and aspirations materialize.

We believe that when coordination between Egypt and most of the Arab countries is completed, the issue of Egypt's return to the Arab League will only be a matter of time. As for the Arab League headquarters, this issue does not worry us because we believe that any Arab spot in the Arab homeland is the same as Cairo. We do not tackle this issue from a chauvinist point of view. We do not insist that the Arab League headquarters should only be in Cairo. What interests us is that the Arab League is effective and capable of assuming its duties. We view Tunis as being as steadfast an Arab capital as Cairo. We consider Tunis as being the same as our capital.

[Al-Harmi] Have you considered Egypt's military participation with the Arab countries, if needed?

[Al-Baz] The question is not as simple as sending forces or military hardware. The important thing is whether we are in agreement with the Arab countries. Does all that endangers their security also endanger our security? Would we agree on a unified concept of security? Would we agree on a unified visualization of the dangers that are engulfing the Arab nation in the east and west? If we agree on all this, then we can agree on how to confront these dangers. Some dangers require coordinated action. Other dangers do not call for the use of additional forces but may require other factors. I would not be revealing a secret when I say that no fraternal Arab country has asked Egypt to dispatch forces to it. I know that there is talk about this issue. But Gulf countries in particular are capable of confronting any threat with their present resources.

[Al-Harmi] What about the Egyptian efforts to halt the Iraq-Iran war and what assistance does Egypt offer to Iraq?

[Al-Baz] We have been seeking to end this war since the very first moment of its eruption. We tried to mediate, but Iran rejected this mediation. We tried to act in the various international fora, whether on the Islamic, nonaligned, or UN level. We also tried, through contacts with third parties, to remind Iran that the issue is not a sedition between the Arabs and the Persians or between Sunnis or Shi'ites. Rather, it is a dispute between two countries on a specific matter, a dispute on borders and on interference in another country's domestic affairs with various means. We were hoping that we could limit this dispute to these borders and to tackle it accordingly prior to settling it. We were hoping this especially since all the Arab countries are ready to discuss these issues with Iran and to reach agreement with it, given that we all are Muslims belonging to this region, and that we will have to coexist for generations to come as we have done in the past. We also tried to make Iran understand that it is impermissible to ignite the flame of sedition between two Islamic countries in this region, or a racial sedition between Arabs and non-Arabs.

With respect to Egypt's support for Iraq, we believe it is only natural that all the Arab countries support Iraq in its defense of its territory and in its rejection to prolonging the war. Iraq now fights on its own territory and does not occupy any inch of Iranian territory. Iraq has also unconditonally agreed to end the war under the canopy of reasonable rules. Of course, one cannot equate the Iraqi stand and the Iranian stand in this respect. Iran knows that its conditions will never be accepted.

[Al-Harmi] What about Egyptian-Palestinian action on the Palestinian case, and the international peace conference?

[Al-Baz] There is coordination between Egypt and the Palestinians as we cannot work toward a settlement of the Palestinian problem in isolation from the party most immediately concerned. Egypt has all along maintained that coming to an agreement and understanding with the Palestinian people and their representaatives is crucial to a settlement. By representatives we mean the PLO. The PLO should not be excluded from any steps or formulas. It is up to the PLO to express the Paletinian people's perception of a solution of the Palestinian problem. Egypt and other Arab countries will then have a supportive role.

[Al-Harmi] What about the issue of Egyptian Tabah, over whose return to Egypt Israel is stil dragging its feet. Is Egypt planning any moves in this regard?

[Al-Baz] The case is now before international arbitration. We are confident that the verdict will favor Egypt, as all evidence points out that this spot is Egyptian territory. Israel's claim that it falls within the territory under its occupation is invalid, and is calculated to strenghten Israel's case for its failure to evacuate all the occupied Arab land. But, God willing, we are determined to liberate this part of Egyptian territory. The verdict of the court of arbitration should be out this year. It will prove that the territory is part of Egypt which cannot be thrown away or allowed to be attacked.

[Al-Harmi] Should the international conference fail to be convened, what kind of solution do you envisage? Do you think the Arabs will be left with the military option, or will they try other avenues?

[Al-Baz] It is not a question of an automatic, straight choice between a military and political solution if a peace plan fails or succeeds. It is one of a long-standing conflict which must be approached so as to ensure Arab rights and fundamental interests. The military option alone is not the right approach to a settlement.

[Al-Harmi] What is Egypt's stand on the IMF, and how will you resolve the differences arising from IMF conditions?

[Al-Baz] The picture of our relations with the IMF is not so gloomy. The IMF is a world facility that behaves according to set rules which may or may not coincide with our interests and thinking. We maintain that we will not have our policies made for us or our national will controlled by any foreign institution—independent or government-affiliated. Every country must conduct its affairs according to its perceptions and interests. We put forward an economic reform program, as we believe this is a requirement for Egyptian national interests. We will cooperate on the basis of Egypt's economic reform program. But if the IMF wants to give us a certain formula or "prescription" for reform which we have to take, even if it is not disciplined or it runs counter to our perceptions, we will turn it down and tell them thank you.

'Abd al-Majid Cited on 'Uprising,' Gulf War

NC151116 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has declared that the Palestinian uprising in the occupied Arab territories constitutes an opportunity that must not be wasted. He added that the situation is too serious to allow for one-upmanship.

Speaking at a seminar on Arab investment that is currently being held at the [former] Arab League headquarters in Cairo, Dr 'Abd al-Majid said the war currently raging between Iraq and Iran is harmful to Egypt's security, as well as that of our brothers in Iraq and the Gulf. As an advocate of peace, Egypt calls for an immediate halt to the fighting and for the immediate implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 598, he added. Egypt also appreciates Iraq's positive response to the peace efforts, he concluded.

Further Reportage on UAE President's Visit

Arrival Statement Cited

NC131515 Cairo MENA in English 1458 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, March 13 (MENA)—President of the United Arab Emirates Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, paid tribute to the strong ties between Egypt and the UAE. In a statement to the press upon his arrival here today, Shaykh Zayid described those ties as firm and brotherly and a model of the excellent relations between two brotherly peoples cooperating in the interest of their countries, and the Arab and Islamic nation.

Shaykh Zayid further said his visit to Egypt will help cement joint efforts in the service of the Arab and Islamic nation. He said the present circumstances require intensifying consultations and meetings among brothers to tackle Arab and Islamic issues in a positive way.

In his statement, Shaykh Zayid said:

It gives me pleasure and members of my accompanying delegation to be here today on the soil of our second country, the sisterly Arab Republic of Egypt, to meet with my brother His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. We have the most sincere brotherly and cordial sentiments for President Mubarak and the dear Egyptian people and have the highest esteem and appreciation for them.

Relations between the United Arab Emirates and the Arab Republic of Egypt are based on strong brotherly ties and are a model of good and excellent relations between two brotherly people who cooperate in the service of their two countries and their Arab and Islamic nation—because the aim and the destiny is one—in a bid to unify the Arab world and strengthen Islamic solidarity, particularly after events have proved that the absence of Egypt from the Arab fold was not natural. We felt sorry for the vacuum which was created by Egypt's absence.

We are confident that our visit to our greater sister country, Arab Egypt, will contribute to strengthening the foundations of our common efforts to support the causes of our Arab and Islamic nation particularly as the present circumstances make it necessary to intensify meetings and consultations among brothers to discuss Arab and Islamic issues in a positive manner because the Arab people look to their leaders from an awareness of the serioussness of the present stage in order to strengthen solidarity and close Arab ranks and mobilise all potentialities for a unified Arab action in the interest of all the Arabs. The United Arab Emirates which believes at all time in the need of common Arab action, is exerting all sincere efforts in its power to realise Arab hopes and aspirations.

We are confident that the ties of brotherhood and common interests which exist between our two countries on the basis of amity and sincerity shall at all time provide a motive for us to continue to exert efforts to strengthen the bonds of cooperation between us in order to realise the aspired aims. I pray Almighty God to bless Egypt always with stability and prosperity and to give success to my brother, His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, who enjoys the wisdom and insight which made him suited to assume the leadership of Egypt and her noble people and work for the realisation of the hopes and aspirations of his people.

We pray Almighty God to give President Mubarak success in his good efforts for the welfare of the Arabs and Moslems.

Dinner Banquet Reported

NC132017 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1906 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 13 Mar (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak hosted a dinner banquet at the 'Abidin Palace this evening in honor of UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan and the delegation accompanying him. The banquet was also attended by People's Assembly Speaker Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub, Consultative Council Speaker Dr 'Ali Lutfi, Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi, deputies to the prime minister, Cabinet ministers, and Dr Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs. It was also attended by Arab ambassadors in Cairo, the governors of Cairo and Al-Jizah, chief editors of Egyptian newspapers, UAE Ambassador to Egypt Hamad Hilal Thabit al-Kuwayti, and Egyptian Ambassador to the UAE Ahmad Qadri.

Al-Sharif Comments on Talks

NC141436 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1045 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 14 Mar (MENA)—Following a round of talks between President Husni Mubarak and UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan this morning, Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said the talks lasted for more than 1 hour and were followed by a meeting of the two delegations under the chairmanship of the two leaders. The information minister stated that President Mubarak welcomed His Highness Shaykh Zayid as a brother and dear friend, adding that this expresses the Egyptian people's love and appreciation for the friendly UAE people and the strong ties Egypt has with the UAE and the other sister countries in the Gulf. The president noted that this relationship is a special one and has always been distinctive.

The information minister added that the talks between Presidents Mubarak and Zayid dealt with the Middle East and Palestinian issues in light of current regional developments. Safwat al-Sharif announced that the two leaders will resume their talks over a working lunch this afternoon, and they will hold further talks tomorrow. The information minister noted that the Egyptian and UAE delegations will continue their consultations at the prime minister's office at 1700 today and will discuss all aspects of economic and technical cooperation.

He said that the second round of discussions between the two delegations will be held at the prime minister's office tomorrow morning. Various aspects of economic, trade, financial, and technical cooperation will be discussed. He added that various bilateral meetings will be held between ministers and senior officials from the two countries. The information minister reported that the discussions also revolved around Arab moves to support and exploit the Palestinian people's uprising, which has become an urgent issue, and to attain the Palestinian people's legitimative rights within the framework of a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis.

The information minister added that the two leaders exchanged views over the details of current contacts with all the concerned parties and over the existing proposals connected with this issue. The information minister noted that Presidents Mubarak and Zayid also emphasized the importance of Arab solidarity, concord, and coordination to achieve the supreme Arab interest and confront the serious problems and crises facing the Arab nations and the Islamic world.

The two presidents also discussed the Iraq-Iran war and stressed the need to hold consultations and coordinate Arab stands to deal with this war's dangers, alleviate the current tension, and confront attempts to expand the conflict. The two presidents asserted that the Gulf states' security is closely linked to Egypt's security. They also emphasized the need to take action, based on an Arab consensus and unified stand, to bring about peace between Iraq and Iran and end the bloodshed for the good of the two countries and that of the regional states, and for the sake of international peace.

Safwat al-Sharif said that His Highness Shaykh Zayid declared his support for Egypt's important role under President Husni Mubarak, and for its efforts to set the Palestinian issue in motion, which have promoted the support of world public opinion for the Palestinian people's uprising. Shaykh Zayid also stressed the importance of serious Arab action based on frankness and sacrifices for the common good.

Statements on Talks

NC141741 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1545 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 14 Mar (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has stated that Egypt welcomes UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan's visit to Egypt. The president added that he and the great Arab guest had discussed a number of Arab issues today. Mubarak asserted that Arab countries cannot be a strong body, whether separately or united, without Arab solidarity. The president praised Shaykh Zayid's stand toward Arab solidarity, saying that since he has known him, the UAE president has been a supporter of Arab solidarity and of settling inter-Arab differences.

In his statements to journalists after his and Shaykh Zayid's visit to the pyramids, Mubarak said he and the UAE president had discussed bilateral relations, and described these as very good and progressing on the correct path. He added that they had also discussed the Gulf war. In this connection, Mubarak used this occasion to appeal to the warring parties to put an end to the bloodshed and exhaustion of resources. President Mubarak asserted that the uprising in the occupied Arab territories must be supported in order to reach a settlement of the Palestinian cause. He added that he had discussed this issue with Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan today.

Commenting on prospects for an Arab summit conference, President Mubarak said Egypt is not a member of the Arab summit conference. However, he noted that if an Arab summit is to be convened, its objectives must be determined in advance. The president asserted his support for meetings of Arab leaders from time to time. Mubarak pointed out that, in addition to good preparation for the summit, Arab leaders must have the conviction and the seriousness in order to be able to resolve problems raised at the summit. He expressed his belief that the mere call for a summit to discuss the uprising might not be enough to convince the entire Arab nation. Mubarak said that it will be necessary to submit an agenda to the Arab leaders prior to such a summit to determine whether they would or would not agree on its convocation.

Interjecting at this point, Shaykh Zayid addressed President Mubarak: Your Excellency, Mr President, even if the Arab world had been lax in supporting the uprising, a conference should still be held. However, since the entire Arab nation supports this uprising, there is no need for an Arab summit. However, there is still a need to awaken the whole Arab body, not only part of it.

Commenting on his impression of the talks he held today with his brother, President Mubarak, Shaykh Zayid said: I have always had a strong belief in the Arab nation's strength. He asserted that the Arab nation can be strong only on the basis of solidarity, the only issue for which we are exerting a great effort. He noted that during their meeting they had exchanged views on ways of achieving Arab solidarity, which is of utmost concern to us.

Asked about his talks today with the envoy of PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, Mubarak replied that he could not disclose what was discussed. He did point out, however, that the meeting came within the context of Egyptian-PLO consultations regarding the moves being made to convene an international conference for peace in the Middle East.

Commenting on U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz' recent tour of the region, especially after the 10-day notice which Shultz had given to the countries concerned to obtain their responses with regard to the U.S. ideas, President Mubarak said he has no definite idea about this matter. However, he expressed his belief that the responses of King Husayn of Jordan, as well as of Syria, had been sent to the United States.

Shaykh Zayid extended his greetings to the Egyptian people, expressing his profound appreciation for the hospitality with which the Egyptian people have received him. He called on the Egyptian people to stand behind their leader, noting that through such a stand Arab solidarity could be reached.

Meets Arab Ambassadors

NC142025 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan received Arab ambassadors to Egypt this evening at Al-Qubbah Palace in Cairo, where he is staying. Members of the official delegation accompanying him were also present at the meeting. The conferees reviewed developments in the Arab and Gulf arenas, efforts aimed at unifying Arab ranks, developments in the occupied Arab territories' popular uprising, and efforts to convene an international conference for peace in the Middle East.

Economic Agreement Signed

NC151322 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1240 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Cairo, 15 Mar (MENA)—An economic agreement between Egypt and the UAE was signed in Cairo today. The agreement provides for cooperation between the two countries in trade and economic matters and in encouraging investment. The agreement was signed on the Egyptian side by Dr Yusri Mustafa, minister of economy and foreign trade, and on the UAE side by Sayf al-Jarwan, minister of economy and trade, who is currently visiting Egypt as part of the delegation accompanying UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan. The agreement aims to encourage the export and import of industrial, agricultural, animal, and natural resources products between Egypt and the UAE, as well as to provide all possible facilities to bolster trade between the two countries. [passage omitted]

Ministers Depart 15 Mar

NC151510 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1445 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 15 Mar (MENA)—UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rashid 'Abdallah and Minister of Economy Sayf 'Ali al-Jarwan left Cairo this afternoon after a 3-day visit, as part of the delegation accompanying UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan. During their stay, the two ministers met with Dr Yusri Mustafa, minister of economy and foreign trade, and Minister al-Jarwan signed an economic cooperation agreement between Egypt and the UAE.

Mubarak Reportedly Declines OAU Chairmanship

NC112202 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2025 GMT 11 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 11 Mar (MENA)—AKHBAR AL-YAWM reports that President Husni Mubarak has declined an offer to be nominated OAU chairman for the next term. Reporting this in its issue to be published on Saturday, the paper says that a large number of African leaders have nominated President Mubarak to the OAU chairmanship and a number of contacts have been made during the past few weeks to get his approval. The nomination was made in appreciation of President Mubarak's service to African issues and in his capacity as the permanent spokesman on Africa and its problems in all international forums. However, the president declined the offer because of his numerous duties.

Mubarak Receives Message From PLO's 'Arafat

NC140932 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0917 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 14 Mar (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak today received a message from PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. The message was delivered by PNC member Sa'id Kamal during an audience with President Mubarak.

Al-Baz Details Contents

NC141320 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1255 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 14 Mar (MENA)—Dr Usamah al-Baz, first under secretary at the Foreign Ministry and head of the President's Office for Political Affairs, said that the message which President Husni Mubarak received today from PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat dealt with the recent developments in the peace efforts and the PLO's stance on this issue. He added that President Mubarak's meeting today with PNC member Sa'id Kamal, who conveyed the message, dealt with some issues related to strengthening the Arab stand, which supports holding negotiations within the framework of an international conference in order to reach a comprehensive and just peace.

Israeli Embassy Incident 'Merely Mistake'

NC151430 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 15 Mar (MENA)—An Egyptian security source reaffirmed today that no one is behind the incident which involved a guard vehicle on Al-Jami'ah Bridge last Friday. The source said that the incident was merely a mistake which occurred when a police guard's personal weapon fired, shattering a window in the car in which he was riding. The source told MENA that the security authorities have no information about the so-called Organization for the Resistance of Zionist Penetration in Egypt [munazzamat muqawamat al-taghalghul al-sahyuni fi misr].

Earlier in the day, a foreign news agency reported that it had been contacted by an anonymous person, who claimed this organization's responsibility for the incident and said that it will resume its operations as a continuation of the Egypt's Revolution Organization's operations against the Zionist infiltration into Egypt.

Investigations, a technical examination of the car, and the criminal laboratory report have proved beyond any doubt that the special operations officer, who was in charge of the security of the bridge, was cleaning his gun when a bullet was fired by mistake. The bullet penetrated the front windshield of the car and smashed it. Then, three officers of the Israeli Embassy's technical security staff fired at the car to scare its passengers, in fear of an attempted attack. The empty shells found at the scene were the same type used in these officers' weapons. No other bullets have been found at the scene, the source added.

U.S. Embassy 'Violated Egyptian Sovereignty'

PM151531 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic
8 Mar 88 p 3

[Unattributed report: "After U.S. Involvement in Egypt's Revolution Case, Two Foreign Ministers Request Punishment of U.S. Embassy"]

[Text] While the wheat agreement with the United States was being discussed during a People's Assembly session, Majdi Ahmad Husayn, Labor Party [SLP] member at the Assembly, opposed the agreement and its terms as being unfair to Egypt. He said that the agreement's terms give the United States the right to rule us and grant it things the Constitution grants only to the Egyptian Government.

Majdi Husayn jokingly said that reality confirms this fact, since the constant building and expansion operations in the U.S. Embassy confirm that the embassy has expanded because of all these things. It was as if he had predicted the future: Four months later a scandal was revealed. It was revealed to everyone that the U.S. Embassy had played a role in the arrest of members of Egypt's Revolution and had detained Defendant No 3 in the case, Ahmad 'Isam al-Din, who was questioned and interrogated in the same way as a government does with its citizens.

Despite the gravity of the crime, 'Atif Sidqi's government is still keeping silent, as if wanting to tell everyone that there is no government in Egypt other than the U.S. Embassy. We requested that the prime minister speak out, but he would not; perhaps because he did not know what to do, since he never faced a situation like this during his service as director of the Central Auditing Agency. That is why he is in a bad fix. To rescue his excellency, we approached men of politics and international law, seeking their views on the case and on what the government should do to rescue both Egypt and its dignity.

Former Foreign Minister Dr Murad Ghalib says: I can only explain the U.S. Embassy's attitude as flouting Egyptian sovereignty. The government must exercise the right to defend its sovereignty and protect Egypt's dignity. It must immediately summon the U.S. ambassador and reproach both him and his government. It must also warn him that such attitudes must not recur. It must also interrogate the citizen who approached the embassy and punish him for what he did. This is because he turned to a foreign quarter, thus harming Egypt's sovereignty.

Former Foreign Minister Muhammad Ibrahim Kamil, who resigned from the government in protest at the signing of the Camp David accords, emphasizes that, if this affair is true, the U.S. Embassy had no right to do what it did. This is because powers of investigation are part of the core of sovereignty. The U.S. Embassy, if what has been reported is true, should have informed the Egyptian authorities.

In a situation such as this the embassy must be admonished because it has violated the sovereignty of the state by conducting an investigation. The powers of investigation and indictment are part of the state's sovereignty over both its territory and citizens.

Minister Muhammad Ibrahim Kamil believes that the state must hasten to admonish the U.S. Embassy as it sees fit, once it has proved that the embassy detained and interrogated Defendant No 3, who reported to it.

As regards the international-legal opinion of this serious precedent, Dr al-Shafi'i Bashir says that international law endorses diplomatic immunity for embassies. In return, embassies are obliged to respect the sovereignty of other countries and not to violate their laws. Any embassy detaining a citizen inside its residence would be considered in violation of the country's sovereignty. If any embassy interrogates citizens regarding criminal matters, this is also considered a gross violation of the state's sovereignty. This is because investigations and trials are among the most sensitive issues linked to the sovereignty of every state. Therefore, if what has been reported is true with regard to the U.S. Embassy's both detaining and interrogating defendant No 3 in the case of Egypt's Revolution—even if he did turn to the embassy of his own accord—then the U.S. Embassy has violated Egyptian sovereignty.

Dr Al-Shafi'i Bashir, head of the international law department at Mansurah University, adds: If the embassy had committed such a violation, or if such violations have been attributed to it, the Foreign Ministry must then summon the ambassador, express condemnation of such acts, and request him to submit an explanation, in view of which it would be able to define its position: either to consider the ambassador persona non grata, in which case his government must withdraw him from the country, or to be content with a declared apology from the ambassador.

Severe crises are liable to erupt in relations between the ambassador's country and the host government because of such violations, which represent excesses on the part of embassies.

Dr Al-Shafi'i Bashir emphasizes that the Egyptian Government should have informed the U.S. Embassy of its protest at the embassy's action, but regrettably it has not done so. Dr Bashir listed a number of examples in this regard. He said: While a Swedish queen was on a visit to France, she interrogated one of her citizens, charged him with a crime, and then passed a death sentence on him. The minute the French Government learned of the incident, it stopped the sentence from being implemented. The Swedish queen was ordered to leave the country immediately and so she did. This had an adverse impact on relations between the two states.

Labor Party Aide Confers With 'Abd al-Nasir

PM140955 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic
1 March 88 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Labor Party Representative Meets With Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir; Islamic Groups Announce Their Solidarity With Egypt's Revolution"]

[Excerpt] The Labor Party has dispatched Assistant Secretary and People's Assembly member Majdi Ahmad Husayn to meet with Dr Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir in Belgrade to inform him of the party's position on his case and to reach mutual understanding with him on forthcoming planned moves. Furthermore, the Islamic groups have issued a statement in which they have declared their solidarity with Egypt's Revolution.

Labor Party Assistant Secretary and People's Assembly member Majdi Ahmad Husayn returned to Cairo last Saturday evening, following a brief visit to Yugoslavia in accordance with the authorization by party leader Engineer Ibrahim Shukri and the party bureau committee, during which he met with Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir to discuss the political and legal circumstances surrounding the issue of Egypt's Revolution and the great political and public benefits of his return to face the legal proceedings.

At the meeting Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir stated that he would not hesitate to make the decision to return at the right time in order to rectify matters. Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir hailed the stand of the AL-SHA'B newspaper and all the opposition newspapers in their objective stance on an issue which has taken on a pan-Arab stamp. Majdi Husayn informed Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir of the party's decision to form a committee of lawyers and jurists to defend him and the rest of the members of the Egypt's Revolution Organization, a decision the party made last week. [passage omitted]

U.S. Reportedly Refuses To Increase Aid

PM151651 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic
8 Mar 88 pp 1, 2

[Fakri 'Abd al-Muttalib report: "No Increase in Cash Sum of U.S. Assistance to Egypt"]

[Excerpt] A responsible source has denied to AL-SHA'B that there is to be any increase in the U.S. economic assistance program this year. The source confirmed that the pronouncements by Egyptian officials accompanying President Mubarak on his recent trip to Europe and the United States, to the effect that the U.S. Administration had agreed to Egypt's request for an increase in the cash transfer sum from $115 million to $500 million, were untrue—which negates the only result that the government media claim to have secured during the recent Washington talks. The United States rejected the request for an increase in the monetary sum despite President Husni Mubarak's pledge before the U.S. Congress to buy U.S. goods to the same value, even though a clause gives Egypt the right to buy goods, except weapons, from any state.

Awqaf Minister Receives Soviet Mufti

NC131845 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1705 GMT
13 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 13 Mar (MENA)—Minister of Awqaf Dr Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub met today with Shamsutdin Babakhanov, mufti of Muslims in the Soviet Union. They discussed cultural and religious relations between Egupt and the Soviet Union and reviewed conditions for Muslims in the Soviet Union. The minister of awqaf agreed to grant scholarships to Soviet Muslims and to provide them with religious and cultural literature from the Higher Council of Islamic Affairs. Dr Mahjub received an invitation from the Soviet mufti to visit the Soviet Union and inspect Muslims' conditions there.

Commentary on Shamir's Visit to Washington

NC141527 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic
1240 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Bahiy al-Din Shu'ayb commentary: "The Coming Days Will Decide the Middle East Peace Issue"]

[Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir is beginning a visit to Washington which is considered important for many reasons:

1. The Israeli Prime Minister is going to the United States at a time when a dispute is arising between him and the U.S. secretary of state over the U.S. peace proposals. Shamir is basically opposed to these proposals and views them, as he put it, as an attempt to lead Israel to suicide;

2. The Israeli prime minister begins his visit to Washington while conflict is mounting between him and half the ministers of the Labor bloc in the coalition government. This dispute has prompted Abba Eban, head of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and member of the Labor Party, to travel to Washington to tell American Jewish organizations that Shamir is not empowered to speak on behalf of the government or the Knesset. Moreover, the Israeli Cabinet issued a short statement after its weekly meeting, explaining that the ministers had discussed the U.S. peace plan and reached no agreement;

3. The Israeli prime minister left for Washington after a farewell demonstration organized by more than 100,000 Israelis, members and supporters of the Peace Now Movement. They urged Shamir to agree to the U.S.

peace proposals. Rejection of these proposals would be a historic mistake, the price of which the Israelis would pay from their security, stability, and livelihood; and

4. Shamir arrives in Washington as the main Jewish organizations are urging him to accept the principle of land for peace. They have sent a memorandum to the Israeli prime minister on this issue, prompting a broad controversy throughout the Israeli political spectrum. This is the first time Israeli organizations have voiced an opinion contradicting the government's position on an essential issue affecting Israel, in Shamir's own words.

In light of these factors, Shamir is going to Washington to attempt to convert the U.S. Administration to his stand, which totally rejects the U.S. proposals, which he views as totally biased in favor of the Arabs. Although the U.S. Administration is asking the region's countries to give definite answers to its proposals before Friday, Shamir wants to succeed in Washington in persuading Shultz to make amendments to these proposals, in order for them to be acceptable to the Likud bloc.

In fact, despite all the difficult circumstances surrounding Shamir's stand on the U.S. peace proposals, Shamir relies on two points to succeed in his mission:

1. The U.S. strategy views Israel as a good ally which should not be overly pressured. Rather, a method of persuasion must be applied to make it respond to the U.S. proposals; and

2. There are forces within the United States supporting Shamir's hard line and urging him to not agree to the concept of an international conference. Furthermore, these forces are urging him to use maximum force to quell the occupied Arab territories' uprising and to bear the international public condemnation of the use of force [words indistinct] in the belief that public opinion will eventually forget about it.

Therefore, Shamir's visit to Washington will be a turning point in deciding Israel's position, whether for or against the U.S. proposals, and in determining the U.S. Administration's ability to press forward in the Middle East peace process. The next few days will decide the situation in the Middle East and will force each party to face its responsibilities, itself, and all others.

Briefs

ADB Loan Agreement

Cairo, March 14 (MENA)—Egypt signed today with the African Development Bank [ADB] an agreement whereby the bank is to extend to Egypt a loan of 16,200,000 dollars, to be reimbursed in 18 semi-annual installments with a grace period of three years. The loan will be used in the purchase of equipment for an extension of polyester threads production project in Kafr al-Dawwar to meet the requirements of the local market. The agreement was signed by Minister of State for International Cooperation Maurice Makramallah and the president of the ADB who arrived in Cairo yesterday on a five-day visit. [Text] [*Cairo MENA in English 1700 GMT 14 Mar 88 NC*]

Agreement With Conoco

Cairo, March 14 (MENA)—The five oil exploration agreements signed yesterday with the American consortium of Conoco involve 76 million dollars as total expenditure on prospecting and exploration operations over an acrage of 12,200 square kilometers in the Western Desert over a six to eight year period, according to a senior Oil Ministry source. Conoco, under the agreement, will pay dollars 12.5 million as signing bonuses and dollars 49 million as production bonuses, the source said. The Egyptian side is to get by virtue of the agreements 85 per cent of net output and the rest goes to the foreign company undertaking prospecting and exploration operations. The Egyptian law is the law applicable in matters pertaining to these agreement and in case of a conflict between both parties, arbitration is to be effected in Cairo in accordance with the rules of the commercial arbitration centre in Egypt instead of the International Chamber of Commerce. Minister of Oil 'Abd al-Hadi Qandil signed the five agreements here last night. [Text] [*Cairo MENA in English 1515 GMT 14 Mar 88 NC*]

Suez Canal Revenues

Ismailia, March 14—(MENA)—The Suez Canal transit tolls in January and February amounted to 211 million U.S. dollars against 200 million dollars during the same period last year. Chairman of the Suez Canal Authority Muhammad 'Izzat 'Adil told a seminar on the development of shipbuilding industry that the average daily revenue of the canal over the last two months was 3.5 million dollars with an increase of 200,000 dollars as the average of passing ships increased from 47 per day last year to 49 in 1988. This seminar which opened today was organized by the Suez Canal Authority in cooperation with Norway. [Text] [*Cairo MENA in English 1415 GMT 14 Mar 88 NC*]

New Investment Projects

Cairo, March 15 (MENA)—Dr. Muhyi al-Din al-Gharib, deputy chairman of the Investment Authority, announced today that the authority sanctioned a Saudi investment company for packing and wrapping of Egyptian products in Nasr City Free Zone with a capital of 15 million pounds. This announcement was made at the evening session of the Arab Investment forum which was devoted to discussing tourism investment opportunities in Egypt. Dr. al-Gharib announced that agreement was reached between the Arab and Egyptian businessmen taking part in the investment forum on the establishment of five holding companies with a capital of 370 million pounds. The first company whose capital stands at 150 million pounds will have activities in the agricultural, industrial and animal production domain. The second company's sphere of work will cover tourism and real estate and has a capital of 100 million pounds. The third company's domain will be chemicals and will have a capital of 50 million pounds. The sphere of activity of the fourth company whose capital stands at 50 million pounds will be engineering industries while the fifth company's activity will cover ready-made clothes and will have a capital of 20 million pounds. [Excerpts] *[Cairo MENA in English 1545 GMT 15 Mar 88 NC]*

Libya

Sudanese Trade Minister Visits Tripoli Fair

LD151111 Tripoli JANA in English 0920 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Tripoli, Mirrikh [March] 15, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Mr I.H. 'Abd al-Jalil, minister of trade of sisterly Sudan, visited yesterday Tripoli's international fair. He toured a number of the wings of Great Al-Jamahiriyah and was briefed in detail on the achievements accomplished by the Libyan Arab people in all walks of life. Expressing in the guest-book his admiration on the above achievements, Mr 'Abd al-Jalil points out that a scientific success has been achieved in the use of local technology and the stress over meeting the basic needs through making use of the resources available in Great al-Jamahiriyah.

Sabha Prison Demolished; Prisoners Freed

LD151943 Tripoli JANA in English 1755 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Sabha, Mirrikh [March] 15, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Inspired by the great historic deed by the leader of the revolution on the 3rd. of current Mirrikh by raiding the prison, demolishing it and freeing of prisoners, the masses of people's congresses and committees, instigated by the revolutionary committees at the Al-Shararah al-Oula-Sabha-municipality [name as received] raided the Sabha prison, demolished it and freed the prisoners inside it. The masses chanted: "The morning broke, neither the prison nor the jailer stayed." They confirmed their pride in the leader's historic deed which will remain immortal in the souls of mankind as a whole.

Attending the demolishing of "Al-Jedideh" [name as received] prison and freeing the prisoners were: the secretary of people's committee for justice, a number of secretaries of people's committees and congresses and a large crowd of the masses of the basic people's congresses, who sent a cable to the leader on this occasion. They expressed their pride and appreciation for the great historic event of the 3rd. of Mirrikh month during which the leader has demolished the jail and has freed the prisoners in one of the greatest liberty festivals realised on the land of Great Jamahiriyah.

Briefs

Burundi Envoy Received

Tripoli, Mirrikh [March] 15., JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—This morning, the secretary of the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison Bureau received the credentials of Burundi's ambassador to Great Jamahiriyah "Zakariya Bania Zako. [name as received] The ambassador gave a speech praising the great historic deed of the leader by demolishing the prison and freeing prisoners. He asserted the keenness of the president of the Republic of Burundi to consolidate and develop the existing bilateral cooperation between great Jamahiriyah and Burundi in various fields. [Text] [*Tripoli JANA in English 1758 GMT 15 Mar 88 LD*]

Mauritania

Romania's Ceaucescu Arrives for Visit

LD150255 Noukachott Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Romanian President Nicolae Ceaucescu continues his visit to our country, which entered its 2d day. The president, his Romanian guest and his wife arrived at the friendship port accompanied by CMSN members and the government. The presidential delegation was welcomed at the airport by Hamoud Ould Ely and the government representative of the Nouakchott area, the mayor of the capital, and the director of [word indistinct].

After shaking hands with those present and welcoming the presidential procession, the two presidents inspected various installations at the friendship port. Ahmed Ould el Zein, director general of Nouakchott independent port, made a speech which addressed the port's material and manpower capability. He said that building this great project took 10 years, during which the Chinese made great efforts to complete it in (?perfect) condition. He said that the results of the first month since the port was commissioned allowed for [words indistinct]. He noted that the existing obstacles are now being surmounted.

The director general of the friendship port said that the wise policy of the president, which seeks to serve the country's higher interests, will inevitably make it possible to overcome these difficulties. In conclusion, he expressed the great joy of the crew of the friendship port in welcoming these distinguished guests.

Romanian President Nicolae Ceaucescu made an important speech, which he started by expressing his grateful thanks to the people maintaining the port, which is a great achievement in the field of maritime communications. The Romanian president said that the friendship port represents one of the banners of national independence, noting that it assumes special importance along the road of economic and social development. In fact, the Romanian president said, in addition to economic and social consideration [words indistinct] and means of communications, it constitutes a firm base of genuine independence. The Romanian president added: Our talks yesterday and today with the president enabled us to arrive at a formula for developing our economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation. There is no doubt that this port will receive Romanian ships in the future. Once again, Mr Nicolae Ceaucescu said, I want to thank the officials, engineers, and workers of this port, and wish them success in all their activities. Let there be more cooperation between our two countries and the sailors and workers of our ports.

The Mauritanian and Romanian delegations this afternoon concluded their working session at the Chamber of Commerce conference hall. The sessions began yesterday evening within the framework of Ceaucescu's official visit. The final session, which centered on bilateral relations, was characterized by the signing of a treaty of investment guarantee. The treaty was signed on the Mauritanian side by Major Mohamed Lemine Ould N'Diayane, CMSN member and minister of foreign affairs and cooperation, and on the Romanian side by Ion Dinca, first deputy prime minister. The signing was attended by Minister of Trade and Transport Hamdi Samba Diop and members of the two delegations.

Departs 15 Mar

AB160822 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 0730 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Nicolae Ceaucescu, secretary general of the Romanian Socialist Party [as heard] and president of the Socialist Republic of Romania, his wife, and the large delegation which accompanied him left Nouakchott yesterday at the end of a 3-day official visit to the country at the invitation of Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, CMSN chairman and head of state. [passage omitted]

Morocco

Bulgaria's Tanchev Arrives on 'Working Visit'

LD101427 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 10 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Petur Tanchev, first deputy chairman of the Bulgarian State Council, arrived before noon today at Al-Manarah-Marrakech airport on a working visit to Morocco. He was welcomed on his arrival by Prime Minister Dr Azzedine Laraki; Moulay Zine Zahidi, minister delegate to the prime minister in charge of economic affairs, Rachidi Ghazouani, minister delegate to the prime minister in charge of planning; Dr Mohamed Belmahi, his majesty's governor over Marrakesh; the mayor of the city; and other officials. [passage omitted]

Received by King Hassan II

LD112358 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Mar 88

[Text] This afternoon at the Royal Palace in Marrakech, His Majesty King Hasan II received Mr Petur Tanchev, first deputy chairman of the Bulgarian State Council. Accompanying him were the deputy minister of foreign affairs and the Bulgarian ambassador to Rabat. During the meeting, the first deputy chairman of the Bulgarian State Council conveyed to his majesty a private message from the Bulgarian State Council Chairman Todor Zhivkov. The meeting was attended by Mr Abdellatif Falali, minister of foreign affairs and cooperation, and his majesty's advisor Mr Ahmed Reda Guedira.

Prime Minister Laraki Receives Italian Official

LD151957 Rabat MAP in English 1219 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Rabat, Mar 15. (MAP)—Moroccan Premier Azzedine Laraki received here Monday visiting Italian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Charge of Cooperation Mario Raffaelli. The two sides surveyed Moroccan-Italian cooperation which recorded a noteworthy progress during the past years particularly in the sectors of technical cooperation, agriculture and vocational training. Laraki stressed the need to explore new avenues to enhance further bilateral cooperation, diversify trade exchanges and promote collaboration between the two countries' private sectors and economic operators.

PRC Cultural Minister Conducts 'Official Visit'

Meets With Prime Minister

LD112137 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Mar 88

[Text] At the prime minister's office this afternoon, Prime Minister Dr Azzedine Laraki received Chinese Culture Minister Wang Meng, who is on an official visit to Morocco. The meeting was attended by Culture Minister Mohamed Benaissa. Dr Azzedine Laraki talked about the ancient ties between the two countries. He pointed out that the exchange of meetings and visits will contribute to consolidating the relations of cooperation between Morocco and the PRC. The Chinese official, for his part, expressed his country's readiness to strengthen these relations in all fields.

Meets With Benaissa, Departs

LD150123 Rabat MAP in English 1223 GMT 14 Mar 88 txt

[Text] Rabat, March 13, (MAP)—Chinese Minister of Culture Wang Meng left here Saturday at the end of a five day visit during which he had had a series of talks with Moroccan officials including his peer Mohamed Benaissa. Upon departure Meng told the press he looked with Moroccan officials into bilateral relations and cultural exchanges existing between Morrocco and China adding that it was agreed to hold a Moroccan cultural week in China next summer.

Commerce Minister Notes Results of Libyan Visit

LD112257 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Mar 88

[Text] Commerce and Industry Minister Abdallah

Azmani, head of an important delegation of Moroccan businessmen, returned to Morocco this afternoon following a visit to the Arab Libyan Jamahiriyah. The minister made the following statement at Mohamed V Airport:

[Begin recording] During our visit to sisterly Libya we had an opportunity to meet officials from the institutions in charge of foreign trade. The visit enabled the businessmen who accomapnied me to have important meetings, and to come to an understanding with Libyan officials on goods imported from Morocco by sisterly Libya.

Our visit to sisterly Libya coincided with the Tripoli international fair. The opportunity also arose for Libyan institutions to discuss with Moroccan officials the possibility of setting up a joint company [as heard] with the Kingdom of Morocco. This company was set up, and it will begin operating in the near future. In addition, officials from Casablanca's Chamber of Commerce and Industry met officials from Tripoli's Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This meeting had an excellent impact on economic relations, and resulted in an agreement to set up a joint chamber. This chamber will constitute an important channel for supplying officials of both countries with economic details to boslter trade exchanges. Thank you. [end recording]

Sudan

Al-Mahdi To Resign if Program Not Approved

JN151921 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1445 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Khartoum, 15 Mar (SUNA)—Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi gave a speech before the Constituent Assembly today. He announced that he would form a new government within 3 days if the Assembly approved his government's program for the upcoming period, which he presented to the Assembly.

If the Assembly does not approve the program, he said, he will tender his resignation and the Assembly will have to form a new government.

At the beginning of his speech, Al-Mahdi reviewed the positive aspects as well as the shortcomings of the government over the past period. He talked about the democratic system, describing it as the best system because it allows the government to be taken to account by the parliament, and at the same time requires firmness and flexibility in making decisions. In his speech before the Assembly and in the framework of the government program for the upcoming period, the prime minister said any impression that democracy is incapable of solving the country's problems must be removed and thus the program can be implemented.

The program includes new legislation to replace the September laws, the general mobilization fo all resources to confront the war in the south, the urgent convening of the constitutional conference, and [words indistinct]. It also includes the endorsement of the four-point program for salvation, the laying down of the [word indistinct] charter which accords unionist aspirations, the laying down of a permanent constitution for the country, and the revision of the elections law.

Moreover, the government's program provides for the rectification of the shortcomings of the past period. These include failures in civil service, in the provision of food suplies, and in polarizing official effort, in addition to other failures described by the prime minister as instituional. He stated them as follows: The failure to examine the Constituent Assmebly's committees; subjection of the resolutions of the executive body to party reviews; and the failure of the prime minister to take into account parliamentarians in the required way, in addition to some intrinsic factors that directly affected the performance of the government.

The prime minister continued his presentation of the government program, stressing the need to completely remove the traces of the May regime, to convene the constitutional conference, and to administrate the south in accordance with the provisional Sudanese charter—the Islamic inclination with non-Muslims given freedom to believe in and express their own creeds. He also stressed the need to form a committee for administrative reform, (?to assign) the legislative and the executive authorities to exercise their full role, to organize the practice of freedom of the press so state secrets may not be published, and to provide necessities and required services; namely, bread, medicine, petrol by-products, popular textiles, transportation, popular housing, matches, meat, soap, corn, and cooking oil.

Al-Mahdi called for organizing the practice of freedom of organization, reviewing regional government, carrying out regional elections, and considering the problem of marriage a national problem and exerting efforts to facilitate it. He also called for revising rents in the cities, stressing Sudan's stand in international circles, caring for relations with Asia, especially with Japan and China, and carrying out a positive Arab role by emphasizing the strategy of Arab unity and supporting the uprising of the Palestinian people. On the African front, he called for supporting the trend for African unity and for backing African revolutions for freedom.

In addition, he called for an end to the Iraq-Iran war and for a reconciliation between the two countries. He also called for the recognition fo the right of the Afghan people to self-determination.

Mr al-Mahdi counted the fields in which the government failed. He noted the field of civil service, where the government failed to play a role and act concretely to reform its bodies. It also failed to distribute food supplies and control prices, which resulted in the prevailing of a parasitical system leading to a mad rise in the price of the dollar. The government also failed in polarizing the official and the popular effort to solve the problems of the country, in addition to the failure in the previously mentioned institutionalism.

The assembly will discuss the government problem at a later date to be set by the political groups in the Assembly.

Ethiopia Accepts Tripartite Meeting Proposal
JN151157 Khartoum SUNA in English 1040 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Khartoum, Mar. 15, (SUNA)—President Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia has accepted a proposal by his Egyptian counterpart, President Husni Mubarak, to attend a tripartite meeting between the two presidents and Premier Sadiq al-Mahdi of Sudan, a daily newspaper reported today. The daily AL-USBU' said it was expected that the meeting would be convened before the African summit conference, next May. It further pointed that President Mubarak had earlier received a message from President Haile Mariam expressing his content over the Egyptian efforts to realize reconciliation between the Sudan and Ethiopia on the one hand and the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) rebel movement of John Garang.

Talks Predicted 'Soon'
JN151446 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1407 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Khartoum, 15 Mar (SUNA)—Sudan and Ethiopia are to hold talks soon to settle the problems between them. The talks are a continuation of the dialogue recently started between the Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and the Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam. This was announced in a press release today by Al-Tawm, minister of culture and information and the official government spokesman. Al-Tawm added that the Egyptian efforts for reconciliation between Sudan and Ethiopia have succeeded in achieving a breakthrough between the two countries.

During a recent visit to Sudan, Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak was informed of the proposals which Sudan presented to Ethiopia on holding meetings of the joint Sudanese-Ethiopian committee, proposals which were agreed upon during the meeting between Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and President Mariam.

Ethiopia Accused of Keeping Imported Arms
EA151857 Omdurdman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1400 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Brothers and sisters in the south, all Sudanese in the north, south, east, and west: Muhammad Chuol [not further identified] greets you and salutes all fighters in the south of our beloved homeland. [passage omitted]

Brothers and sisters in the south, all Sudanese, we say that neighboring Ethiopia has a plan, whereby it is trying to solve its own problems inside the territory of Sudan. It is being helped by socialist states in this effort. Of course, people do not know the details of the agreement between the SPLA and Mengistu Haile Mariam. Even the members of the SPLA do not know exactly what is in it, but we want to tell them. Ethiopia receives a large quantity of weapons from socialist states, all destined for the SPLA. However, the Ethiopians appropriate the APC's, the heavy artillery, and three-fourths of all the other weapons. Money comes to them in foreign currency—dollars—which they transfer to their own vaults. John Garang knows all this and still he has signed an agreement with Mengistu Haile Mariam.

The donor countries have no knowledge of what happens to this aid. Does it reach the SPLA movement? Does it, as reported, reach Garang? Are the armories full and the weapons being sent to people in the bush? I speak on the basis of personal experience, from when I was in Libya. I know that a batch of weapons was sent to Ethiopia for us in Anya Nya II. All of them were appropriated by Ethiopia and transferred to their Army. Uniforms, boots, and many other things were all commandeered by the Ethiopian Army. The proof is that the Ethiopian soldiers now do not wear Ethiopian Army uniforms. Their uniforms are those from the socialist states which support the SPLM.

Therefore, we tell our brothers that we are not mercenaries. A desperate, sick, and poor state is benefiting from the blood of our sons who die, claiming they are dying for a purpose and not dreams. The purpose is now being achieved by the Ethiopian state. We are the butt of the jokes of those people who laugh at the Sudanese people and their aspirations and progress. [passage omitted]

President al-Mirghani on Arab, Ethiopian Ties
LD161018 Kuwait KUNA in English 0841 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Kuwait, March 16 (KUNA)—Sudanese President Ahmad al-Mirghani has emphasised the importance of implementing "all Arab charters and agreements" to achieve Arab solidarity and to counter external challenges. In an interview with daily "AL-ANBA'", published here Wednesday, Al-Mirghani called on Arab leaders and peoples to extend support to the popular uprising, currently raging in the occupied Arab territories, adding, an urgent Arab summit conference should be convened towards this end.

Calling on the two Gulf belligerents, Iraq and Iran, to put an end to their protracted conflict, the Sudanese head of state urged Arab countries to unify their stances and back Iraq, which responded to all peace calls, including

Security Council Resolution 598. He said restoring security in the Arab Gulf region and putting an end to the bloodshed between the two neighbouring Muslim countries, require implementation of all Arab charters and agreements.

Al-Mirghani, currently on a ten-day tour that includes Libya, Malta and Morocco, said as Arab solidarity depends on rapprochement between Arab states, "we insist on restoring Egyptian-Libyan relations," adding he will discuss the matter with Libyan leaders in a bid to fulfil that goal. The Sudanese official said he expects the Sudanese-Egyptian "fraternity charter" to be signed next month and noted that Egyptian Premier 'Atif Sidqi is scheduled to pay a visit to Khartoum coming April.

On his country's relations with Kuwait, Al-Mirghani spoke highly of Kuwaiti continuous assistance and support to Sudan. He said Kuwaiti aid to Sudan during years of drought and desertification, and assistance to development schemes in south Sudan "constitute enough proof of greatness of Kuwait" which works toward verification of Arab and Islamic identity. Extending best wishes and regards to his highness the amir of Kuwait, his highness the crown prince and premier and the Kuwaiti Government, Al-Mirghani asserted that Sudan "backs, boundlessly, the Kuwaiti people in face of threats and challenges" aimed at destroying the Arab identity in the Arabian Gulf.

On Sudanese-Ethiopian relations, Al-Mirgani said Sudan is not at enmity with Ethiopia, noting that diplomatic drives are currently underway to improve relations between the two countries. He said his country is keen on preserving its sovereignty and dignity, and emphasised that Sudan will not accept "bargaining." Khartoum accuses Addis Ababa of backing insurgents' movement in south Sudan, while Addis Ababa says Khartoum allows Eritrean fighters to launch attacks against Ethiopian Army outpost from Sudanese territories.

Al-Mirghani said the south Sudan problem can be solved internally and without foreign interference, indicating that the Sudanese Army, operating in the south, "is in full control." On the economic crisis in Sudan, he said the government has taken necessary measures to correct the situation in the country.

Ministers Suspend Security Companies' Licenses

JN141201 Khartoum SUNA in English 1040 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Khartoum Mar 14 (SUNA)—The Sudanese Council of Ministers has decided to withdraw licences given to security companies in the country and to suspend their activites a daily newspaper AL-AYYAM reported today. The Council had asked the Sudanese attorney general to inform these companies and to immediately implement the decision the paper said. It is understood that two major companeis carrying private security services here are operating in the Sudan and are believed to be only nominally steered by Sudanese nationals.

SPLA Threatens To Shoot Down Aircraft Over Juba

EA151249 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Alternate Member of SPLM/SPLA Political-Military High Command and zonal commander of central south Sudan, Commander Kuol Manyang Juk, has appealed to the citizens in Juba town to move away from areas surrounding army barracks. He also appealed to Army, police, prisons, and wildlife forces to remove their families away from the military areas which are vulnerable to SPLA attacks.

Commander Kuol Manyang Juk also warned the international relief agencies to evacuate their members from Juba immediately and to stop flying into Juba forthwith. This warning is also repeated to any military or civilian aircraft that may use the airspace in the south to stop doing so immediately, otherwise it will be shot down.

SPLA Reports 112 Soldiers Killed in Ambush

EA151825 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Combined SPLA forces of Bee, Shark and Zalan Battalions around Waw under operational command of Captain (Achunyi Dao) and the overall command of Commander Daniel Aweit Akuot, alternate member of the SPLM-SPLA Political-Military High Command and zonal commander of northern Bahr al-Ghazal, made a successful ambush on an enemy convoy 16 miles from Uwayl on Waw-Uwayl road on 8 March 1988. Correspondents said that the enemy suffered very heavy casualties in manpower.

One hundred and twelve enemy soldiers were killed, 32 of whom were southerners and westerners whose bodies were left on the battleground, and the bodies of the northern soldiers were collected and taken to Waw for burial together with the wounded by the remnants of the enemy soldiers. Five military vehicles and one tank, Challenger, were destroyed. More than 100 bundles of clothes were captured and one G-3 [rifle], No 66621383, was discarded and collected by the SPLA forces. The remnants of the enemy troops retreated to Waw in disarray. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

Jordanian Court Minister Arrives With Message

JN151713 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Tunis—Court Minister 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah arrived in Tunis this evening with a message from His Majesty King Husayn to His Excellency Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. In an arrival statement, Abu 'Awdah said that King Husayn's message deals with the recent political developments in the region. The message, he added, is an expression of Jordan's commitment, under His Majesty King Husayn, to the principle of consultation with his brothers, the Arab leaders, on the issues which concern the Arab nation in order to unite their views on pan-Arab issues. Upon arrival at Carthage International Airport, Abu 'Awdah was received by Slaheddine Baly, minister of state for national defense; the president's secretary; the protocol chief at the Foreign Ministry; the Jordanian charge d'affaires in Tunis; and a number of senior officials.

Holds Meeting With Ben Ali

LD160150 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] This afternoon at the palace of the Republic in Carthage, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received Mr 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah, minister of the Hashemite Jordanian court and King Husayn's personal envoy to the head of state. After the meeting, 'Awdah said that he came carrying a letter from the Jordanian king to his brother Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, stressing that it contained an invitation to his excellency to visit fraternal Jordan at a time suitable to him, and that the head of state had welcomed this invitation. The letter also contains a briefing on the ensemble of developments witnessed by the Middle East and on the international stances on the Palestinian uprising, an issue that now preoccupies the public, and to which Jordan, and the rest of the neighboring states, is closely linked.

Mr 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah said the president had charged him with conveying his greetings and appreciation for His Majesty King Husayn and his good wishes for the Jordanian people.

Leaves Tunis for Algeria

JN152147 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Tunis—His Excellency Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali today received a message from His Majesty King Husayn, delivered by Court Minister 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah. [passage omitted]

He added that the Tunisian president had expressed his appreciation of King Husayn's efforts to serve Arab issues and his initiative to inform him about the political developments that followed the popular uprising. [passage omitted]

The court minister left Tunisia for Algeria and Morocco, where he will deliver messages from His Majesty King Husayn to his excellency the Algerian president and his majesty the king of Morocco.

Algeria's Messaadia Confers With Baccouche

LD152232 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] This evening at the government palace in Casbah, Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche conferred with Mohammed Cherif Messaadia, Politburo member and head of the Permanent Secretariat of the FLN Central Committee. The meeting was attended by Mr Messaoud Ait Chaalal, Algerian ambassador in Tunis.

Bulgaria's Tanchev Continues Visit, Talks

Meets Ben Ali, Baccouche

LD152039 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] This morning at the Republic Palace in Carthage, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had a meeting with Petur Tanchev, first deputy chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, secretary of the Bulgarian National Agrarian Union, and special envoy of President Todor Zhivkov to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche and the Bulgarian ambassador in Tunis also attended the meeting.

After the meeting, Petur Tanchev expressed his satisfaction at the talks he had with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, which were held in a very cordial atmosphere. The talks stressed the two countries' desire to raise their bilateral relations in the political, economic, and cultural fields to a high level.

The Bulgarian envoy said he has conveyed a message to the president from President Zhivkov that included an invitation to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to pay a friendship visit to Bulgaria. The Bulgarian envoy noted that the visit by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who is the youngest Arab head of state [as heard], would reunify Bulgaria's solidarity with the Arab cause. Tanchev pointed out the good prospects open to Tunisian-Bulgarian cooperation and wished the Tunisian people full success and further achievements.

Departs Tunis 15 Mar

LD152226 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Petur Tanchev left Tunis this afternoon after a visit to Tunisia leading a Bulgarian government and party delegation. [passage omitted]

Ben Ali Comments on Maghreb Affairs, Gulf War

PM151243 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Mar 88 pp 4, 5

[Interview with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali by 'Uthman al-'Umayr and 'Abd al-Jalil Damaq in Carthage; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How can Tunisia secure active media services and a press to express its voice abroad at this stage?

[Ben Ali] Tunisia, especially since the change that occurred on 7 November, has become the focus of media attention because of the qualitative developments now taking place in various fields. The 7 November movement is considered to be a precedent in the history of the Third World, to which we belong, since it occurred in a civilized way. World media services, with their various inclinations, have endorsed this. Besides, the new Tunisian leadership has embarked on courageous decisions covering numerous aspects of life in Tunisia, namely public freedoms, the youth, and health, as well as the economic and social sectors. [passage omitted]

How can Tunisia secure active media services and express its voice outside? The media, any media, can only carry out its mission both actively and effectively when the appropriate political, cultural, and social climate is available for it. We will not have an active media unless we create a sound political climate and regulations to protect it—something which the 7 November statement brought about. It stressed that the press law should be reconsidered and replaced by a law that would guarantee press freedom and create a suitable political and cultural atmosphere for media officials, so they can carry out their mission free of the pressures which used to be exerted on them.

In implementing the 7 November principles, some practical measures have been taken to enable journalists to carry out their duties while waiting for the new press law, whose preparation we are about to complete. [Ben Ali ends] [passage omitted]

The president, who is proud of his short experience in power, does not stop at this point. He is determined to make a change. He told me: "I will make changes in the state structure. We are seeking to make suitable changes for the better and in the interests of Tunisia and its people.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] And what about dissolving parliament before the end of its term in 1991?

[Ben Ali] We are contemplating that. It could be dissolved before the end of its term. [Ben Ali ends] [passage omitted]

"We believe it would be futile to question the PLO's relations with the countries that host its activities on the basis of such relations." This is a statement by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, whose residence is only a few dozen kilometers away. He added:

[Ben Ali] This is because we should not talk about the existence of competition between Arab capitals in this regard, since this matter has nothing to do with competing for the purpose of portraying oneself as backing both the cause and the PLO. It is a pan-Arab duty which prompts the Arab states to provide the Palestinian brothers with every possible facility and back them so that their struggle and maneuvers will be enhanced. On the basis of this conviction, we in Tunisia do not feel upset regarding Palestinian activities in other states. Nor do we think that they belittle Tunisia's status, as the official residence of the PLO.

As for the other aspect of the question, there is no room to talk about the existence of misunderstandings between Tunisia and the PLO. Nor is there room to cast doubt on the firmness of our relations with our Palestinian brothers and their sacred cause. Our relations with the Palestinian people and leadership are both cordial and fraternal. Cooperation is continuing between us in the political field on the basis of the foundations we have agreed on and in accordance with what Tunisia can offer by virtue of its resources and geographic position. The Palestinian leaders, who have taken Tunis as a residence to carry out an important part of their activities, are working within the agreed framework. We both are satisfied with the good results of this cooperation and have always worked toward strengthening it to serve the cause and higher Palestinian interests.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali emphasizes that endeavors being made by Tunisia with a view to stopping the hemorrhage that has resulted from disputes in the Arab Maghreb are showing positive signs. He must have certainly talked about this issue with Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid and Morocco.

[Ben Ali] He has described the meetings that have taken place as aimed at deepening dialogue and achieving rapprochement and comprehensive cooperation, as well as establishing balanced relations among all countries of the region without exception. This can be achieved by coordinating efforts and consultations, creating a suitable atmosphere, and creating common ground in order to overcome problems and devote time to the economic and social progress for which our peoples long, thus proceeding firmly toward our objective of building a greater Arab Maghreb. This idea is not a slogan or an emotional reflection resulting from certain circumstances. The building of the Maghreb is a future necessity that is no longer a secret. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] And within this framework, how would you assess your relations with Libya? Have matters returned to normal, as mentioned in official statements?

[Ben Ali] The considerations I mentioned earlier constitute fixed principles in our policy with all the states in the region, especially Libya. Therefore, we are eager to clear and normalize relations with our neighbor on the basis of the continent's principles, which include good-neighborliness, respect for national sovereignty, and noninterference in others' affairs, as well as the idea that we should settle any disputes that might erupt among us through brotherly dialogue and with mutual respect.

This will help establish sincere and impartial cooperation and channel our efforts and aspirations toward serving only our common interests.

I believe that there has been a conviction among our brothers in Libya, especially since the change that occurred on 7 November, that good intentions, mutual trust, and satisfaction among us are elements capable of eliminating the causes of the crises that erupted in the past. We are working seriously in this direction and are determined to eliminate all negative aspects to build a better future in which the spirit of brotherhood and complete understanding prevail. The joint higher committee meeting at the end of March will be an important step, God willing, toward strengthening bilateral cooperation in various fields.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It has been mentioned that you have agreed with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi on the issue of the continental shelf and its exploitation for the purpose of extending a gas pipeline from Algeria to Libya across Tunisian territory. Does this rapprochement mean that the Arab Maghreb building can be based on common economic and social interests, regardless of differences in political viewpoints among the ruling regimes?

[Ben Ali] In our view, any achievements realized at a bilateral or trilateral level constitute a common gain for all the Maghreb parties, whatever their size and benefit because benefits can be realized within the framework of collective work.

We do not deny that some political stands may differ in their assessments and that some circumstantial problems have taken place in the region in recent years, affecting the dynamism of Maghreb relations. But this must not prevent us from establishing extensive and comprehensive economic, social, and cultural cooperation that could pave the way to achieving a rapprochement at various levels, thus bringing political viewpoints closer, especially when the elements of such a rapprochement are both true and numerous. The peoples of the Arab Maghreb belong to one civilization in terms of religion, language, culture, and their way of living, and that makes our states capable, by their cohesion, of serving our common interests.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] So what can a country like Tunisia do to achieve a united greater Arab Maghreb? And will it continue to play a role in overcoming obstacles resulting from stands adopted by some states regarding the [Western] Sahara problem?

[Ben Ali] Tunisia's logic in any work it embarks on in the region is its belief that the unity of destiny and interlinked interests among the Maghreb states, as well as the type of relations linking their peoples, prompt us to secure a rapprochement, sound coexistence, understanding, and perseverance in order to overcome obstacles and clear the atmosphere of anything that hampers our common march. Undoubtedly there are some obstacles resulting from differences in viewpoints regarding the Western Sahara problem. And our duty is to work toward overcoming them so that there will be no real obstacles preventing us from achieving our objectives. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How do you visualize an end to the Gulf war which has continued for 8 years and do you have a personal view in this regard on the grounds that your country hosts the Arab League?

[Ben Ali] It is a cause for sadness that the Iraq-Iran war has continued for so long, between two Muslim countries that ought to unite their efforts in order to raise their peoples' living standards, achieve economic and social progress, and secure factors of strength and impregnability for the Islamic nation in a sensitive region which is a target for ambitions. It is a region in which the enemies seek to sow the seeds of spite and hatred so that they will be able to exploit its resources and impose hegemony on its peoples. Regrettably, all attempts have failed with regard to persuading Iran to stop this destructive war and accept the recommendation made for a just and permanent solution to its conflict with Iraq.

Furthermore, attempts made by the ICO, the Nonaligned Movement, and also other international organizations have failed as well. The Arab states have repeatedly made appeals to the Tehran government, calling on it to apply wisdom, reason, and consideration for higher Islamic interests, to stop shedding Muslim blood, and preserve Muslim lives, property, and their future from damage and losses, since the Islamic nation needs to have its ranks united and its resources marshalled so that it can confront the threats aimed at it. But these appeals have neither succeeded nor achieved any results.

The Security Council adopted Resolution 598, which is a balanced resolution taking into consideration the interests of both conflicting parties and does not prejudice either of them. But it encountered procrastination on the part of Iran, whereas Iraq accepted it. This prompted the seven-man committee assigned by the Arab League Council to follow up developments in the Iraq-Iran war to resume its efforts to secure a firmer resolution from the Security Council. These efforts are being made at a time when there are numerous attempts aimed at expanding the war zone toward Kuwait and jeopardizing the freedom of navigation in the Gulf, and attempts are even being made to kindle the fire of sedition among pilgrims in holy Mecca.

Hopes are now pinned on the Security Council's reaching a resolution that will persuade Iran to turn to negotiations and accept a peaceful solution. [Ben Ali ends] [passage omitted]

The Tunisian president will be Saudi Arabia's guest this month. He has received an invitation from King Fahd, conveyed by Interior Minister Prince Nayif ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, who was the first Saudi official to meet the Tunisian president. Tunisia attaches great importance to that visit. In fact, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali is eager to make his first official visit to Saudi Arabia. His visit to Algeria was a working visit. He will be accompanied by a delegation comprising four ministers, among them Information Minister Abdelwahab Abdallah and the foreign minister.

"Our relations with Saudi Arabia," the president says, "are perfect, although Almighty God is the only perfect thing. One can only do his best and everything human can be worked at, developed, and improved. We would assess our relations with the Kingdom as positive. Our relations are both excellent and ideal. However, being of a human nature, these relations can be both rejuvenated and improved. So it is our duty to match up to new facts and maintain a future vision that will strengthen cooperation and brotherly relations between the two countries and ensure their continuity." [passage omitted]

Intra-Gulf Affairs

GCC Foreign Ministers Begin Meeting 15 Mar

LD152139 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 15 Mar (SPA)—The GCC Ministerial Council began at 1830 today the meetings of its 26th session with the attendance of their highnesses and excellencies the GCC foreign ministers at the headquarters of the Council's Secretariat General in Riyadh. His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister and chairman of the present session of the Council, delivered a speech at the beginning of the meeting. [passage omitted]

He stressed the importance of this meeting which comes in the shadow of Arab and international circumstances of special significance and which follows the eighth GCC summit in Riyadh. He described that summit as a continuation of the joint Arab action of the GCC states. His highness said the Council states have paid great attention to regional issues and issues of Arab and Islamic nations and have tackled the questions of cooperation and coordination among GCC states. [passage omitted]

First Session Ends

LD152145 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] tonight the GCC Ministerial Council ended its first session which lasted approximately 3 hours. Following the meeting, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister and chairman of the present session, told journalists: We have covered some items on the agenda and a meeting is to be held tomorrow morning, God willing.

Session Resumes 16 Mar

LD160936 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0648 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Mar (SPA)—The GCC Ministerial Council resumed its 26th session this morning under the chairmanship of His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister, at Council headquarters in Riyadh.

Kuwait

Decision Made To Attend Extraordinary Summit

LD141332 Kuwait KUNA in English 1255 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Kuwait, March 14 (KUNA)—Kuwait has agreed to attend the extraordinary Arab summit, called for by Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid to discuss the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories which completed its third month March 8, an official source said Monday. The source told KUNA the Arab League General Secretariat in Tunis had been notified of Kuwaiti's decision.

Kuwait is the first Arab country to declare its blessing of the Algerian president's call to hold such a summit, which no date has been specified yet for its convocation. Kuwait's decision was voiced by Acting Premier and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, two days after Bendjedid relayed his call to Arab leaders.

Ties With Iran Seen Restored in 'Next Few Days'

PM151643 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 8 Mar 88 p 1

[Muhammad Nawwar report: "Kuwait, Iran to Restore Diplomatic Ties Soon"]

[Text] According to Arab diplomatic sources, Kuwait has begun preparing its embassy and consulate in Iran for reopening when diplomatic relations between the two countries are restored in the next few days. These developments follow Syrian mediation efforts aimed at restoring ties between Iran and the Gulf states, especially Kuwait, which has expressed interest in distancing itself from the current Gulf conflicts since the serious escalation in the Iraq-Iran war of the cities.

PDRY

Three Decrees Issued Ratifying Agreements

EA102301 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 10 Mar 88

[Text] Brother Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas, member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Supreme Peoples Council Presidium, has issued three decrees. The first article of the first decree provides for the ratification of the protocol of the general agreement between the PDRY and the Soviet Government on comprehensive development of oil fields, signed in Moscow on 9 February 1988.

The first article of the second decree provides for the ratification of the financial protocol between the PDRY and the French Republic Government, signed in Paris on 30 December 1987.

The first article of the third decree provides for the ratification of the Arab telecommunications union agreement, issued [as heard] by the extraordinary conference of plenipotentiary delegates convened in Tunis on 23 November 1987.

The second articles of the three decrees enjoins all officials in their respective spheres of jurisdiction to implement the provisions of the agreements referred to in the first articles of the three decrees. The remaining articles validate the decrees from their date of issue and publication in the official gazette.

Saudi Arabia

Jordan's King Husayn Arrives; Met by King Fahd

LD161325 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1305 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Mar (SPA)—His Majesty King Husayn ibn Talal, king of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, arrived in Riyadh at 1440 this afternoon. His majesty was greeted at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh by King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques.

President Meets Military Leaders 15 Mar

JN152056 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2035 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 15 Mar (INA)—His Excellency Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic and staff field marshal, met with General 'Adnan Khayrallah, deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces and defense minister, a number of military commanders, and Colonel Husayn Kamil, the official in charge of the military industries organization.

Ramadan Meets 'Uprising' Support Committee

JN152113 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Taha Yasin Ramadan, RCC member and first deputy prime minister, has met a delegation representing the Arab committee for supporting the uprising being staged by the Palestinian Arab people in the occupied territories.

The first deputy prime minister saluted the popular Palestinian uprising and said that it embodies the will of the Arab individual who rejects all forms of foreign occupation. He said that the uprising also embodies the Arab's constant readiness to defend his sovereignty and rights, despite the use of all means of terrorism and aggression. He also reiterated Iraq's unlimited support for the struggle being waged by the Palestinian Arab people under the PLO, their sole legitimate representative.

The committee delegation voiced its deep appreciation for Iraq and the leader of its march, His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, for his support for the Palestinian revolution and the uprising being staged by the Arab people against the racist Zionist authorities in the occupied territories.

The delegation comprises Dr 'Abd al-Hasan Zalzalah, Arab League assistant secretary general for economic affairs; and 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Yahya, PLO Executive Committee member. The meeting was attended by the under secretary of the Foreign Ministry.

Ramadan Addresses Arab Energy Conference

JN141701 Baghdad INA in English 1540 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Baghdad, Mar. 14, INA—On behalf of President Saddam Husayn Mr. Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolution Command Council and Iraq's first deputy prime minister opened the 4th Arab energy conference here today.

Addressing the 4-day conference Mr. Ramadan underlined the need for restructuring world economy in a way serving the interests of all parties concerned stressing that Iraq was always calling for the stability of oil prices in order to avoid flutuations resulting from the speculations of oil companies.

Mr. Ramadan also reiterate Iraq's support to OPEC and its pricing and production policies.

He said that the hosting of this conference by Iraq was an expression of its backing to the efforts aimed at boosting joint Arab action and achieving Arab economic integration.

Mr. Ramadan recalled that after long time of foreign domination of Arab oil resources, the Arab countries had succeeded in putting an end to the exhaustion of their resources.

Pointing out to the continued Iranian aggression on Iraq, Mr. Ramadan said Iraq spared no effort in carrying out construction and development. [passage omitted]

Arab League's Klibi Arrives for Visit 12 Mar

Arrival Statement Noted

JN122018 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1930 GMT 12 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Mar (INA)—Arab League Secretary General Chedli Klibi has described Iraq's missile reply to the Iranian aggression as legitimate defense of the sacred soil.

In a statement made to INA upon his arrival in Baghdad tonight, he said that Iran's insistence on continuing the war, despite the international community's will, represented by UN Security Council Resolution 598, is the reason which prompted Iraq to make this violent reply. While making this reply, Iraq, he added, continued to abide by international legitimacy and international law. Klibi went on to say that Iraq's favorable response to peace bids, especially UN Security Council Resolution 598, has won it the respect of all parties in the international arena. This happens, Klibi said, while Iran resorts to procrastination and prevarication to avoid implementing the said resolution.

The Arab League secretary general recalled the resolutions adopted at the extraordinary Amman summit, which reiterated the unanimous Arab support for Iraq in its confrontation of the Iranian aggression. He indicated that during his visit to Iraq he will attend the opening of the fourth Arab energy conference on 14 March. He will also hold talks with Iraqi officials on the developments of the Iraq-Iran war, the plan of action of the seven-member Arab committee entrusted with following up these developments, the developments of the Palestinian uprising, and the Arab efforts being exerted to support it. He will assess the international contacts in this matter.

Chedli Klibi voiced his appreciation of Iraq's hosting the fourth Arab energy conference and said: It pleases me to see Baghdad host this pan-Arab conference at a time when Iraq continues to display lofty steadfastness in the face of the Iranian aggression for the 8th consecutive year.

Received by 'Aziz

JN131246 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1210 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Mar (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met with Arab League Secretary General Chedli Klibi here today.

The meeting's discussion dealt with the latest developments in the Iranian aggression against Iraq and the political contacts underway to implement UN Security Council Resolution 598 in a serious manner, and to impose sanctions on the Iranian regime for its refusal to abide by it.

The two sides also discussed the developments in the Arab region in light of the escalation of the heroic uprising of the Palestinian Arab people; the task of the uprising council that was formed by the Arab League; and the visits it intends to make to the capitals of the countries which are permanent members of the UN Security Council, visits which will begin with London on Tuesday.

Confers With Ibrahim

JN131641 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1600 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Text] RCC Vice Chairman 'Izzat Ibrahim received Arab League Secretary General Chedli Klibi today. During the meeting, Ibrahim expressed Iraq's appreciation for the Arab League's efforts to promote the joint Arab action and reveal the Iranian regime's aggressive and expansionist intentions. He also stressed the inevitability of Iraq's victory over the Iranian enemy, because Iraq relies on a just cause in confronting the aggressive and expansionist Iranian policy. He also referred to the soundness of the military situation on the battlefornt, the strength of the domestic front, and the growing Iraqi combat and tactical capability in confronting the Iranian aggression.

For his part, Chedli Klibi expressed his greetings to and appreciation for President leader Saddam Husayn and his pride in Iraq's advanced defensive capability and its people's steadfastness in the face of aggression. He also praised Iraq's principled and positive positions on peace calls and its adherence to the need to end the war and bring about peace. He pointed out that Iraq's position enjoys international support. The meeting was attended by Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

'Aziz, Klibi Leave for London

JN141218 Baghdad INA in English 1140 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, Mar. 14, INA—Mr. Tariq 'Aziz, member of the Revolution Command Council and Foreign Minister and Arab League Secretary General Mr. Chedli Klibi today left here for London to joint the 7-member Arab committee entrusted with backing the popular uprising in occupied Palestine.

The Arab committee delegation starts its visit to London in the course of a tour that will also take its members to France.

Speaking to INA before departure, Mr. 'Aziz said the committee would discuss means of supporting the brave Palestinian uprising and efforts for reaching a just settlement to the Palestine issue.

He added that the committee would also have talks with British and French officials on the situation on the Arab territories and necessity of realizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arab people according to international and the Arab league resolutions on various levels.

The Iraqi foreign minister added that the task of the Arab committee would be confined to following up affairs of the Palestinian uprising and called for boosting moral and material Arab support to it.

Mr. 'Aziz said that the committee during its recent meeting adopted a decision on contacting all Arab countries for extending further material support to the uprising.

He added that Iraq previously extended material backing to the Palestinian masses and is continuing this support.

Iranian Human Rights Violations Condemned

JN131621 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1510 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Mar (INA)—Mas'ud Rajavi, chairman of the National Resistance Council for Liberty and Independence, has described the UN Human Rights Commission's decision to condemn human rights violations in Iran as a great international victory for the Iranian resistance.

In his message to the commission, broadcast by the Mojahed radio, mouthpiece of the Iranian resistance, Rajavi said condemnation of the Khomeyniite regime's crimes by the Human Rights Commission for 7 successive years, and by the UN General Assembly for 3 successive years, explains the nonlegitimacy of the dictatorial Khomeyniite regime.

In the message, Rajavi also said that this regime acts against humanity and carries out brutal repressive actions in conflict with the simplest principles of human rights. He also expressed his appreciation for the counties which have condemned the Khomeyniite regime's actions and violations of human rights. He expressed hope that the international community will use every means to end the war as well as repressive actions and killings in Iran, and to implement an oil and arms embargo against the Khomeyniite regime.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

Shelling of Basra Continues

JN151110 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1023 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Basra, southern Iraq, 15 Mar (INA)—Iranian long-range artillery and rocket launchers continued to shell residential districts in the city of Basra last night and this morning.

An INA correspondent in Basra said that the Iranian shelling resulted in the martyrdom of 9 citizens and the injury of 20 others, most of whom were children.

He added that the Iranian shells are falling on the city arbitrarily and include most of its districts. They demolished a number of houses and shops and damaged others. They also destroyed a number of cars and other civilian properties.

Iraq's message on the renewed Iranian shelling of residential districts in Iraq cities and villages was distributed among the UN Security Council members yesterday.

Qal'at Dizah Raided

JN151456 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1444 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 15 Mar (INA—A military spokesman has announcerd that two Iranian planes raided residential quarters in Qal'at Dizah in the Al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate at 1000 [0700 GMT] today.

In a statement to INA, the spokesman said that the raid martyred and wounded a number of civilians, including women, elderly people, and children. He added that it also damaged a number of houses, commercial stores, civilian cars, and other civilian property.

Communique Lists Missile Hits

JN151812 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1707 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,076 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 15 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

International public opinion has realized that the war of the cities, reignited by the Iranian regime, is part of this regime's scheme to perpetuate its war of aggression. The regime of charlatans has failed to achieve its designs. Its expectations were foiled. This regime wants to compensate for its setbacks by the escalation of the war of the cities in the hope that it may harm Iraq's resolution.

However, Iraq's firm determination is the same determination which has repulsed the enemy's many offensives over the years of the war. It is also the same determination which has produced the very lethal Al-Husayn missiles and carried out devastating air strikes. Once again the magic wand turns against the magician. The course Khomeyni and his clique have chosen will place them in a dilemma as a result of Iraq's burning fire. With God's support, we continue to tighten the noose around the necks of those who wanted this war of cities. The following has been achieved:

1. At 2327 [2037 GMT] yesterday, an strike was carried against the city of Tehran with Al-Husayn missiles. This is the ninth missile strike since the Iranian regime resumed the war of the cities on the night of 12-13 March.

2.At 0231 today, the 10th missile strike with Al-Husayn missiles was dealt against the city of Tehran.

3. At 0730 today, the 11th missile strike was dealt against the city of Tehran with Al-Husayn missiles.

4. At 0830 today, the 12th missile strike was dealt against the city of Tehran with Al-Husayn missiles.

5. At 1030 today, the 13th missile strike was dealt against the city of Tehran with Al-Husayn missiles.

6. At 1415 today, the 14th missile strike was dealt against the city of Tehran with Al-Husayn missiles.

7. At 1730 today, the 15th missile strike was dealt against the city of Tehran with Al-Husayn missiles.

We are determined to transform Tehran, the capital of charlatanism, into an inferno which the rogues have never experienced. With God's help, we are capable of doing so. May God bless the Iraqi men in the military industries and in the Al-Husayn missile force. They are the best and most loyal supporters and defenders of their country. We thank God for giving us this mighty force to knock out every oppressor.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 15 March 1988

Communique Details Air Strikes

JN151836 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,075 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 15 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The aircraft of our heroic Air Force continued to go deep inside Iranian territory to pound their selected targets in Iranian cities, in retaliation for the Iranian regime's disregard of the principles laid down by Iraq, according to which it halted its attacks on Iranian cities. This was represented by the shelling by the charlatans' regime of Iraqi cities, including our capital Baghdad, and also by its launching of a new aggression against our international borders. Our rapacious hawks carried out the following missions last night and today:

1. At 1939 [1639 GMT] last night, a destructive blow was dealt to the city of Dezful.

2. At 2210, our planes dealt another destructive blow to the city of Dezful.

3. At 2213 last night, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Kermanshah [Bakhtaran].

4. At 0730 this morning, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Hamadan.

5. At 0928, other numbers of our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Masjed-e Soleyman.

6. At 0929 this morning, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Shushtar.

7. At 1038, a destructive blow was dealt to the city of Ilam.

8. At 1040 this morning, our planes launched a second raid on the city of Hamadan.

9. At 1043, a destructive blow was dealt to the enemy's economic and military installations in Khorramabad.

10. At 1049, a destructive blow was dealt to the city of Malayer.

11. At 1056, a destructive blow was dealt to the city of Khomeyn to turn it into useless debris, like the one bearing its name.

12. At 1059, while carrying out their tasks, our hawks spooted an enemy helciopter gunship. They fired one of their missiles at it, and managed to down it in the northern sector of operations.

13. At 1119, a third destructive blow was dealt to the city of Dezful.

14. At 1132, a destructive blow was dealt to the city of Zanjan.

15. At 1319, a destructive blow was dealt to the city of Shahabad [Eslamabad].

16. At 1400 today, a destructive blow was dealt to the fuel reservoirs in the Emam Hasan oilfields, destroying them and setting them ablaze.

17. At 1406, a destructive air strike was dealt to the city of Rasht.

18. At 1421, our planes raided the city of Borujerd and pounded their targets there.

19. At 1512, our planes raided the city of Reza'iyeh [Orumiyeh], showered it with a barrage of their projectiles, and pounded their targets there.

20. At 1536, our planes launched a new raid on the city of Pol-e Zahab and destroyed their targets there.

21. At 1547, our planes once again dealt a strike to the television transmission equipment in the Taheri area to hush the voice of superstitution and charalatanism there.

Having carried out all of these tasks, all of our planes returned safely to base, in God's care and protection.

Let Khomeyni, Khamene'i, Rafsanjani, Musavi, and the rest of the slaves of Zionism, the ignorant, backward rulers of Iran, know that we will turn their Tehran and all of their cities into hell, and that we will blacken all of their days. Let them also know that they are too feeble to undermine Iraq. We are the present and the future and we seek to uphold truth and peace. We possess enough exceptional power to deal the greatest blow to them.

They are the losers because they live in the stench and corruption of the past and also because they are devoid of any knowledge and any power.

Glory and pride to our Air Force: command, hawks, officers, and other ranks. They are proud men all the time. Whenever the homeland calls for defenders, they are quick to answer the call. Praised be the Lord for the obvious victory that He granted to us.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 15 March 1988

Communique No 3,077

JN151952 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1714 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,077 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 15 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our victorious Armed Forces continued to carry out their combat activities. The following is a roundup of their combat activities for last night and today:

1. The planes of our heroic Air Force carried out 256 combat missions to strike at and destroy the enemy troops in the operations theaters and to carry out their tasks deep inside enemy territory. These tasks were referred to in our Communique No 3,075, which was issued this evening. Having carried out all of their tasks, all the valiant hawks returned with their planes safely and victoriously to base, in God's care and protection.

2. Our daring helicopter gunships continued to carry out their activities. The valiant knights of these gunships carried out 190 combat sorties, inflicting grave losses on the aggressors. At 1115 [0815 GMT] today, while carrying out their tasks, these knights spotted an enemy Bell-214 helicopter gunship. They dealt it an accurate hit and managed to destroy it. It was seen falling in flames.

This is the second helicopter gunship downed by the knights of the helicopter gunships in 2 days. Having carried out the aforementioned tasks, all of our helicopter gunships returned safely to base, God be praised. May God bless the courageous knights of the helicopter gunships.

3. There were 27 scoundrels killed, 2 vehicles and 3 infantry positions destroyed, and 5 ammuniton dumps blown up in the I Army Corps northern sector.

4. One enemy soldier was killed and one ammunition dump was destroyed in the II Army Corps central sector.

5. Four enemy personnel were killed and one infantry position was destroyed in the IV Army Corps sector east of Maysan.

6. Five enemy personnel were killed and two different positions were destroyed in the V Army Corps northern sector.

7. One bulldozer was destroyed and five personnel were killed in the VI Army Corps sector east of the Tigris.

8. Two vehicles, including one which was transporting personnel, were burned and destroyed, two machinegun positions and one infantry position were destroyed, and one ammunition dump was blown up in the VII Army Corps sector.

9. Nine enemy boats tried to approach the loading platform of the Al-'Amiq port. The valiant port force confronted these boats with its weapons and forced them to flee the scene.

10. At 1000 today, two enemy planes raided residential quarters in Qal'at Dizah in the Al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate. The raid martyred and wounded a number of civilians, including women, elderly people, and children. It also damaged a number of houses, commercial stores, and civilian vehicles. Using long-range artillery, the vile Khomeyniite regime continued last night and today to shell residential quarters in the citeis of Basra, Al-Qurnah, Al-Zubayr, Qal'at Salih, Halabjah, Darband Khan, Al-Majarr al-Kabir, 'Ali al-Gharbi, and Qazan.

The enemy shelling martyred a number of our civilians and wounded more civilians. Women and children were among those martyred and wounded. The shelling also demolished and damaged a number of houses, shops, and other civilian property. May our martyrs enjoy paradise as their fianl and eternal abode and may swift recovery be the lot of our wounded, God willing.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 15 March 1988

Maritime Target, Cities Hit

JN160616 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0600 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The planes of our heroic Air Force carried out the following heroic missions:

1. An accurate, effective hit was dealt to a large maritime target off the Iranian coast. [no time given]

2. At 2000 [1700 GMT] last night, a devastating blow was dealt to the city of Rasht.

3. At 2100 a destructive blow was dealt to Dezful.

After carrying out these missions, all our planes returned safely to base. Praise be to God.

[Dated] 16 March 1988

4 More Strikes on Tehran

JN160648 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0610 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. In order to make the dirty Iranian rulers aware of the consequences of their cowardly actions, in order to place before them their inability to confront Iraq's increasing capabilities, in order to tell them that the kick of the dying mule will never be able to protect them, but will throw them in the abyss of death, and until we announce, through our right, that Iraq is triumphant, regardless of what the enemy does, claims, or carries out in terms of follies here and there, we will continue to make their lifetime short.

We will continue to deal them blows that will take them to the inevitable death, which is the fate of those living dead bodies. With God's care and with the help of our men in the military industries, we will continue to destroy the dens of vice and ugliness.

O glorious Iraqis, at the same time today, 0830 [0530 GMT], four strikes were dealt with Al-Husayn missiles. These strikes were the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th. All of this anger was poured only on the city of Tehran, the capital of charlatans, to shout in the ear of the misled clique and to tell them which of the two capitals will be hell. This is Iraq and this is its might. Just give us an example of what Iraq has done and is doing if you are true to yourselves. However, fishing in muddy waters and insipid maneuvers will not protect you from God's wrath and Iraq's destruction.

Blessed be the men of the military industries and the Al-Husayn missile force. March ahead under the banners of the most courageous and glorious leader, hero Saddam Husayn.

[Dated] 16 March 1988

Baghdad Hit by 2 Missiles

JN160726 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0652 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. At 0115 and 0155 [2215 and 2255 GMT on March 15], after midnight last night, the agents of Zionism, the Iranian rulers, fired two missiles at our eternal capital, Baghdad.

Each of them fell on a residential area, martyring several civilians and wounding several others. A number of our glorious women, esteemed elders, and dear children were among the martyrs and wounded. The missiles also destroyed and damaged several houses, shops, and other civilian property.

May God have mercy and forgiveness on our martyrs. A swift recovery to our wounded, God willing.

[Dated] 16 March 1988

20th Strike on Tehran

JN160806 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0752 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our heroic missile force continued to destroy the dens of barbarism and aggression, to punish the killers of women and children, and to give the Iranian rulers new lessons in good conduct. If the Iranian rulers will not benefit from these lessons, then we will continue to strike at the sites of pain until we take the devils out of their heads and make them a lesson for everyone.

At 1030 [0730 GMT] today, the 20th strike with Al-Husayn missiles was launched at the city of Tehran. Blessed be the good efforts, the men of our military industries, and the missile force. Praise be to God.

[Dated] 16 March 1988

Iranian Plane Bombs Irbil

JN160855 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Irbil, 16 Mar (INA)—An Iranian plane bombed residential areas in Irbil Governorate at 0600 [0300 GMT] today.

The INA correspondent in Irbil said an enemy plane bombed residential areas in Irbil, and that the bestial bombardment martyred 2 civilians and wounded 23 others, including 9 women and 2 children. The correspondent added that the bombardment also demolished several houses and damaged shops and civilian property.

Iranian Shelling Reported

JN160911 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0825 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Basra, 16 Mar (INA)—The Iranian regime resumed its intensified shelling of residential areas in the city of Basra with long-range artillery and launchers at 0615 [0315 GMT] today.

The INA correspondent in Basra said that the intensified shelling of residential areas with artillery and launchers wounded several civilians and damaged houses, civilian property, and shops. The correspondent pointed out that the Iranian regime's artillery and launchers also shelled the city of Al-Qurnah, 75 km north of Basra, and its suburbs, and that the shelling martyred one citizen and wounded nine women.

The Iranian shelling also included the city of Al-Zubayr. The shelling martyred three civilians and wounded one citizen. The shelling was continuing when this report was prepared at 1015 [0715 GMT] today. The correspondent said the shelling damaged several houses, shops, and cars.

Al-Ta'mim Areas Raided

JN160918 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0909 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Mar (INA)—An Iranian plane raided the Al-Ta'mim Governorate, aiming at residential areas, at 0611 [0311 GMT] today.

An Iraqi military spokesman said the incident martyred and wounded several civilians, including a number of women and children, and demolished and damaged several houses, shops, and civilian cars and property.

Further Strike on Irbil

JN160929 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0918 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 16 mar (INA)—Two Iranian planes raided residential areas in the Irbil Governorate, northern Iraq, at 0614 [0314 GMT] today.

A military spokesman told INA that the incident martyred and wounded several civilians, including women and children, and demolished and damaged several houses, shops, and civilian cars.

Missile Strikes Baghdad

JN161026 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1013 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. At 1236 [0936 GMT] today, the Iranian regime fired one of its missiles, which were supplied to it by the Arab nation's enemies. The missile fell on a residential area in the city of Baghdad, the capital of glory and peace. The incident martyred and wounded several citizens, and demolished and damaged several houses, shops, and other civilian property.

Mercy and forgiveness to our martyrs and a swift recovery to our wounded, God willing.

[Dated] 16 March 1988

Iranian Plane Downed 15 Mar

JN161121 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1111 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. At 0023 [2123 GMT] yesterday, an enemy plane attempted to penetrate our international airspace in the heroic IV Army Corps sector. The valiant men of our antiaircraft defenses confronted the plane and scored a hit. It was seen falling ablaze inside enemy territory.

Blessed be the men of our IV Army Corps. Praise be to God.

[Dated] 16 March 1988

2 Missiles Fired at Tehran

JN161203 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1128 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Iraqi blows continue to inflict pain on our cowardly enemies. We will continue to pound the dens of corruption. The Al-Husayn missiles are forcing the entire world hear the voice of freedom, truth, justice, and peace which stems from Dar al-Salam.

If anyone attacks the sanctity, citizens, or the soil of this homeland, the Al-Husayn missiles and the bombs of the Iraqi Air Force will turn his dens into ashes. The Iranian rulers must never think they can send their scoundrels to the incinerator on our border and still remain safe from certain death. Death will knock on their doors and shake the very structure of their collapsing regime, God willing.

At 1400 [1100 GMT] today two missile strikes were simultaneously carried out against Tehran with Al-Husayn missiles. Let Tehran have its fill of Iraqi fire. We will feed it with more fire whenever it is hungry. Our will and support stem from God.

[Dated] 16 March 1988

Planes Raid 7 Iranian Cities

JN161211 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1120 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Let the burning anger continue to pour on all those who seek evil. Let this hell continue to burn the miserable Iranian rulers for what they have done. Along with the Al-Husayn missiles now raining down on Iran, the bombs of the Iraqi Air Force distribute death to those who want it everywhere day and night. In additions to our announcement this morning, the following air strikes were delivered:

1. At 0730 [0430 GMT] today, our planes carried out a destructive raid on the city of Kermanshah [Bakhtaran].

2. At 0820 today, our planes carried out a devastating raid on the city of (Salahi).

3. At 0858, our planes carried out a devastating raid on the city of Daran.

4. At the same time, a number of our planes carried out a devastating raid on the city of Shadkam.

5. At 0900 today, our planes carried out a devastating raid on the city of Shahpur.

6. At 1011 today, our planes carried out a devastating raid on the city of Riza'iyah.

7. At the same time, a number of our planes were carrying out another devastating raid on the city of Shahpur.

8. At 1052, our hawks challenged the air defenses of our country's enemy. They carried out a lightning raid on the air defense system in the city of Tabriz. They destroyed their targets.

9. At 1100 today, our planes carried out a devastating raid on the city of Tabriz in Iran.

10. At 1105, our planes carried out a devastating raid on the strategic Qotur bridge which links Iran with the outside world.

11. While carrying out their missions against enemy units, our planes spotted a Bell helicopter which they totally destroyed.

After carrying out all of these heroic missions, all of our planes returned safely to base with God's care.

[Dated] 16 March 1988

U.S. Photographer Charged With Stoning Soldiers

TA151851 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] A photographer for a prominent U.S. weekly has been charged with participating in a violent disturbance and throwing stones at soldiers in Nabulus. The photographer is believed to have fled Israel. Steve Rodan has the story:

[Begin recording] Officials say William (Biggert) raised eyebrows soon after he arrived in Israel. (Biggert) identified himself as a staff photographer for the VILLAGE VOICE, one of the leading weeklies in the U.S. He applied twice for a government press card, sources say, once with a beard and a second time clean shaven. He was said to have explained that he did not want to look like a Jewish settler.

Officials say (Biggert) certainly didn't act like any Israeli. On March 8 a violent disturbance broke out in Nabulus. An Israeli officer spotted a man wearing an Arab kefiyyeh hurling stones. The man turned out to be William (Biggert). Soldiers grabbed him and took away his U.S. passport and government press card. Then a senior officer ordered that his passport be returned. The army officer pressed charges against (Biggert) and an investigation was opened at the Nabulus police station.

On Saturday a policeman arrived at the American Colony Hotel, where (Biggert) was staying, and presented him with the summons for a court appearance the following day. (Biggert) called the U.S. Consulate for advice, but was told that the consulate could not give advice in an Israeli legal matter. The next day (Biggert) flew to the United States as scheduled.

Foreign correspondents have been detained and even arrested in covering the last 3 months of the Palestinian unrest in the territories. But officials say this is the first time that a foreign journalist or photographer has been charged with actually taking part in a violent disturbance. Tonight officials say police are still looking for William (Biggert). One aide told me: We would like at least to speak to his editor. [end recording]

The executive editor of the VILLAGE VOICE confirmed that William (Biggert) works for the newspaper, although he added that he is not a staff photographer. The editor, Keith (Redfish), told reporter Steve Rodan that the newspaper is investigating the matter and will soon issue a statement.

Shamir Says Territories Unrest Constitutes War

TA150557 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Last night Prime Minister Shamir saw the U.S. Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci, and then appeared at a conference of the UJA [United Jewish Appeal] Young Leadership. Connie Lonn reports:

[Begin recording] [Lonn] Prime Minister Shamir has delivered a tough and rousing speech to the 3,000 members of the UJA Young Leadership Conference in Washington. He told them:

[Shamir] I know you are disturbed by what you see on television. Make no mistake about it. What you see is not demonstrations. It is not sit-ins. It is not civil disobedience. It is war.

[Lonn] The prime minister added: It is not just war for Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. It is a war for a Palestinian state in those areas. It is a war against Israelis, against the existence of the state of Israel.

The prime minister also said he is astounded at the short memory of some people. He adds: Did we have peace when we did not have those territories? Don't you remember, he asks. The two most dangerous attempts to destroy Israel in 1948 and 1967 were made when Israel did not control those territories. But he repeated his contention that Israel is always open to new, constructive ideas, and has made many sacrifices for peace.

The prime minister said the talks with the leaders of the administration begin in earnest later today. He said they will be friendly, frank, and sincere. He added: We shall try to convince them of our views, and say we are coming with an open mind to listen to what our American friends have to say. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Shamir Sees No 'Pressure' During U.S. Talks

TA160600 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Shim'on Schiffer, correspondent in Washington, on 15 March—recorded]

[Text] [Schiffer] I asked the prime minister to summarize his talks in Washington so far.

[Shamir] The talks are being held in the same atmosphere of friendship that marked previous visits. I do not see any difference. The atmosphere of special relations and cooperation that has always prevailed between the United States and Israel continues, and I hope this will be the case in the future, too. My interlocutors are making a special effort to make sure that we feel no change or difference.

[Schiffer] What kind of message are you taking to your meeting with President Reagan at the White House this morning?

[Shamir] Well, I cannot sum up my talks at the moment. I will be able to do so only at the end of the talks. It would simply be unfair or even impolite to sum up my talks at this time, when I must continue them tomorrow and the day after.

[Schiffer] In your opinion, Mr Prime Minister, what happened during your appearance before the 3,000 delegates of the United Jewish Appeal? How do you interpret the message conveyed at this reception?

[Shamir] Wherever I turn here I feel massive support from all circles of the Jewish public, including those who had previously expressed themselves a little differently from the [American Jewish] Congress, the youth, and the many Jews who came to shake hands with me this evening. All of them unanimously expressed their support for me.

[Schiffer] As for comments on possible pressure, Yitzhaq Shamir said the following:

[Shamir] I can already say at this point that all those who said there would be pressure, who predicted pressure, were bitterly disappointed. They may be glad to be disappointed, but those predictions were unfounded and did not come true.

Peres Explains Opposition to Palestinian State

TA151148 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
1100 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has explained he is against negotiations with the PLO because, in his view, such contacts would lead to the setting up of a Palestinian state.

[Begin Peres recording] I am against the establishment of a separate Palestinian state, even without the added weight of the Arab refugees that would like to come back here.

My reasons why I object to negotiating with the PLO are clear and simple: Whoever goes to negotiate with the PLO must understand that what the PLO is looking for is an independent Palestinian state; an independent Palestinian state which will have the right—and will surely implement this right—to build a Palestinian army, a Palestinian army which will probably be equipped with Soviet arms and will be supported by Soviet advisers in the gates of Jerusalem. I, for one, wouldn't go for it. [end recording]

Peres was addressing overseas students at the Hebrew University last night. [passage omitted]

Sharon Blames Peres for EC Economic Sanctions

TA151154 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1100 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Industry and Trade Minister Ari'el Sharon has charged Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and his aides with responsibility for the economic sanctions imposed on Israel by the EEC. He says that Mr Peres and his aides have been operating in Europe for months, spreading the ideas which later served as the basis for the European Parliament's criticism of Israel.

Mr Sharon has accused Knesset Member Abba Eban of maintaining improper contacts with Arab elements during the Lebanon war. Our correspondent Menahem Friedman reports that the minister made these remarks in a meeting in Jerusalem.

PLO Mission Closure Sign of U.S. 'Hatred'

TA151929 Jerusalem AL-SHA'B in Arabic
13 Mar 88 pp 1, 8

[Editorial: "What Is Required of the International Body"]

[Text] Two days ago the United States embarked on a new hostile measure against the PLO by adopting a decision mandating the closure of the PLO special mission which enjoys UN observer status.

We do not intend to consider this U.S. measure from the standpoint of representing a fresh expression of black U.S. hatred toward the Palestinian cause as well as an approach clearly reflecting the fact that U.S. decision making has been mortgaged at the hands of the Israeli lobby in the U.S. Congress. This stems from our years of bitter experience with U.S. imperialism, its games, antics, and conspiratorial schemes against the PLO. Therefore, this step looks like a drop in the ocean of ongoing hostile U.S. practices against the Palestinian cause.

We see this hostile U.S. measure as a gift to Shamir who is getting ready to depart for Washington in several hours. At a time when Shultz is trying to depict himself as a "messenger of peace" by presenting the so-called "peace plan" for the Middle East, we wish to consider this grave measure from the viewpoint that it will increase Israel's appetite to harden its policy against the Palestinians in the occupied territories. This decision also represents additional new evidence which we hope will restrain those who hanker for U.S. solutions containing a great measure of hostility toward the Palestinian cause.

Hence, the upshot is that the United States is neither interested in peace nor in giving the Palestinian people their legitimate rights. It is only interested in preserving Israel and saving it from its imbroglio. And apart from all this, the United States wants further concessions and a humiliating curtsy.

Therefore, in view of this U.S. impudence, the new U.S. measure constitutes proof sufficient to foil all illusions still entertained by some Arab leaders about the "credibility" of the U.S. Administration to put forward any initiatives and solutions that might establish a just and lasting peace in the region.

Moreover, the international body whose secretary general, Perez de Cuellar, expressed his strong indignation at this U.S. decision—which constitutes a violation of the site agreement concluded between the international body and the United States—is required to adopt the necessary legal measures to invalidate this decision and affirm the Palestinian presence in the international body.

Jordanian-Palestinian Contacts 'Bright Picture'

TA151545 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic
14 Mar 88 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "The Uprising—National Unity and a Pan-Arab Aim"]

[Text] The way in which the Jordanian Government addressed the contents of a clause in Statement No 10, which included a call to West Bank representatives to resign and which harmed the unity of the one Arab people on both banks, and the response the PLO hastened to give—by an explanatory telephone call and then by an urgent note to the prime minister—refutes the existence of any talk that might harm the national unity of our one Arab people.

We stress that the way the Jordanian prime minister handled this problem and the haste that characterized the contacts of the PLO representative in Amman, followed by his written response, portray a bright picture of Jordanian-Palestinian coordination—a coordination that addresses national issues through a pan-Arab perspective transcending narrow regional considerations and tactical political differences.

The concern by Jordan and the PLO about the unity of the one Arab people on the two banks has become apparent. Moreover, Jordan's and the PLO's insistence that the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip be preserved as a national cleansing, a historic unity, and as a pan-Arab approach, is but an embodiment of the unity of Palestinian-Jordanian aims. These aims are headed by the liberation of land and man and the achievement by Palestinians of the right to self-determination.

The masses of the occupied territories, who succeeded in legitimizing the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation and its settlement and liquidation schemes, will remain faithful to the spirit and purity of the uprising. These masses, the masses of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the masses of the refugee camps, towns, and villages, the masses of young boys and girls, men, women, workers, farmers, male and female students and teachers, reaffirm that their rejection of the occupation is a priority that no other problem must transcend. Hence, the fate of the homeland is in the heart, mind, and body of every Palestinian living under occupation.

The cohesion by the strata of our people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will remain the sturdy wall resisting all efforts aimed at diverting the heroic uprising from its noble objectives.

Since the Palestinians' faith in unity is our weapon in the battle to liberate our land and people from Israeli occupation, the masses of the occupied territories feel confidence and hope whenever they become aware and hear that our Palestinian brothers in the PLO are eager to unify pan-Arab efforts with the aim of taking a major step to save the Palestinian homeland from occupation.

By this unified effort and pan-Arab coordination our great people's uprising will stimulate the Arab nation into supporting our people, their causes, and their aspirations.

Editorial Says Arab Concessions Must Be Matched

TA151902 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic
14 Mar 88 p 1

[Editorial: "Shamir's Proposals"]

[Text] Despite the tough statements made by Israeli Prime Minister and Likud leader Yitzhaq Shamir against the peace initiative proclaimed by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, he stopped short of rejecting it. A few hours before his departure for Washington, Shamir announced that he is carrying proposals of his own and that he hopes the U.S. Administration will convey these proposals to the Arab states. This means that Shamir is still trying to introduce modifications in the U.S. initiative.

Shamir also talked about the necessity of obtaining concessions from all parties to the conflict, saying that concessions will not be made by one side only. Thus Shamir is striving to convince the world that the U.S. initiative calls on Israel alone to make concessions. What concessions is Shamir trying to obtain from the Arab world?

The Arab states have expressed their readiness to enter negotiations with Israel through the convocation of an international peace conference. In the Fes summit resolutions of 1982 the Arab states endorsed the principle of the right of all the region's states to live in secure and recognized borders. Without exception, the Arab states support the principle of land in return for peace. This means that the Arab states have changed their positions and made many concessions from their previous positions, which were based on the principles of no peace, no recognition, and no negotiations.

The peace process begins when parties to a conflict acknowledge that their rights and interests should not be at the expense of the other party. Without a minimal guarantee for all the parties, including the Palestinian people, talk about peace will merely remain in the framework of maneuvers, tactics, point scoring, and public relations.

United Arab Stand Needed To Reject U.S. Plan

TA091826 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic
9 Mar 88 pp 1, 8

[Editorial: "The Awaited Arab Position"]

[Text] The U.S. Administration is waiting until the 15th of this month for answers from Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Israel on the plan of Secretary of State George Shultz, which he presented to them last week.

Although none of these countries has officially responded to this U.S. plan so far, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in some of his recent statements referred more than once to the "positive" points in it. According to his view, these points are suitable for effectively beginning a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the region.

The Jordanian Government, through a statement the day before yesterday by Information Minister Hani al-Khasawinah, did not hesitate to announce that there were "positive elements" in the above U.S. plan or initiative. The Jordanian Government did not go beyond this under the pretext of "waiting," apparently until its official response—"inspired," according to this Jordanian minister, by a unified Arab position—is drawn up.

As for the Syrian regime in Damascus, it left it to some of its semiofficial newspapers to talk "calmly" about the U.S. initiative, without giving an unequivocal rejection or clear acceptance.

This is contrary to the PLO, which declared its rejection of this initiative as long as it does not contain any of the Palestinian national rights and does not provide a serious format for the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

This is on the Arab level. As for the Israeli level, the coalition government is now talking in two languages, that of the Likud represented by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, and that of the Alignment, represented by the vice prime minister and foreign minister. These two have not yet agreed on any official Israeli response to the proposed U.S. plan.

At any rate, the relationship between the United States and Israel is clear and firm in its dimensions and strategic foundations. Consequently, any Israeli response on the date determined by George Shultz, or later, will not signify a new turning point and will have no effect on this strategic relationship. The Alignment-Likud "disagreement" in Israel is not an indication of any important calculation or hypothesis. This is a pure electoral disagreement. Whether it will disappear later makes no difference.

The problem, as we see it, is in the Arab position. What will it be and how will it respond to the U.S. plan? The signals that have originated so far from Cairo, Amman, and Damascus affirm the confusion of this position, as usual. This allows the Israeli Government, despite its electoral differences, to exploit Arab hesitancy further to its own benefit and naturally to the benefit of the United States.

We call for a unified Arab position in rejection of this plan, on the basis that it is a repetition of old and exhausted ideas, and on the basis that it will not be able to establish the aspired peace.

Likud Members Call for Narrow-Based Government

TA141237 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1200 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Likud leaders have decided to negotiate with the small Knesset factions to create a coalition majority to support a narrow-based government without the Alignment. Our correspondent Amnon Nadav has learned that in discussions held late last week, the Likud leadership decided to set up a committee for this purpose. The committee is made up of Knesset Members [MK] Kaufman, Matza, Linn, and Magen.

In a meeting of the Likud Knesset faction this afternoon, most of the speakers called on the prime minister to force the Alignment out of the cabinet and set up a government with a narrow majority. MK David Magen urged setting up a narrow-based government before the Passover holiday. MK Yehoshu'a Matza called for immediately forming such a government, and MK Glazer-Taasa called on the prime minister to remove those she called the vipers from the cabinet and set up a narrow-based government.

NRP Rejects Reduced Cabinet

TA081233 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
1100 GMT 8 Mar 88

[Text] The National Religious Party [NRP] says it will not support a narrow-based government. The political secretary of the NRP, Sha'ul Yahalom, said his party would not stay a single day in a reduced cabinet. Yahalom's remarks followed the demands by Likud representatives to fire Shim'on Peres.

60 Knesset Members Approve

TA141653 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1600 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Likud Knesset faction chairman Hayim Kaufman says that a four-man group he heads is negotiating with the small parties to set up a narrow-based government if a decision is made to force the Labor Party out of the government. He said the Likud has assurances of support from 60 Knesset Members [MK], excluding MK Me'ir Kahane. A decision will be made on the prime minister's return from the United States.

Labor Party Secretary Knesset Member 'Uzi Bar'am said his party decided that his Knesset faction will not raise controversial motions, such as early elections, as long as the prime minister is abroad. 'Uzi Bar'am believes that a proposal to set up a narrow-based government is not serious, and prefers to regard it as a joke.

Peres: Alignment Not To Resign

TA141602 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said today that the Alignment has no intention of resigning from the government of its own initiative. Our correspondent Qobi Mandel heard him in Haifa today:

[Begin recording] [Mandel] Students from the Kefar Galim boarding school on the outskirts of Haifa asked Shim'on Peres sharp questions today about the events in the territories and Likud-Alignment relations. The vice prime minister reiterated that the international conference is the key to a dialogue with Jordan and that the Likud is destroying the chances.

[Peres] Today, too, there is a danger that if we spoil the conditions, Husayn will not come to the negotiations. This is not an automatic thing. I think that what the Likud is doing today is actually destroying the chances for negotiations with Jordan, because I cannot see Jordan coming without an international conference or other promises.

[Mandel] Answering a question on whether or not he would participate in a national unity government if the results of the elections were similar to the previous election's, Shim'on Peres said he would not recommend participation in a paralyzed government, similar to the one we have today. Meanwhile, Peres said, there is no reason for the Alignment to resign from the government, despite the remarks of people like Minister Moda'i.

[Peres] I must say that this person has no party and no ideology, and that he is living on his tongue, which is rolling on at a rate he cannot keep up with. [end recording]

Shamir Aides Dismiss Move

TA150810 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] The prime minister rejects the Knesset Likud faction's initiative to try to establish a narrow-based government upon Mr Shamir's return from the United States, his associates said last night. Senior Likud circles described the initiative of several Likud Knesset members [MK] as hot air and childish board games. Our correspondent Dov Gilhar reports:

[Begin recording] [Gilhar] It is not at all serious. It does not stand a chance. This is how circles close to the prime minister last night described the initiative by Hayim Kaufman, the head of the Knesset Likud faction. Kaufman has begun contacting the small right-wing parties in a bid to set up a narrow-based government without the Alignment. The prime minister, his aides say, is opposed to such an initiative. They say that neither Kaufman nor any of the members of the team set up to hold the contacts asked Mr Shamir's opinion before making a statement to the media about starting the contacts.

The objective, the prime minister's associates say, is media-oriented rather than practical. Another source said: These are childish board games which the MK's have begun to play, taking advantage of Yitzhaq Shamir's absence from Israel. Minister Hayim Corfu described Kaufman's actions as hot air. How can one establish a government based on 60 or 61 MK's, a government that will be shaken by any soft breeze? asked Corfu. MK Hayim Kaufman rejects these arguments.

[Kaufman] If the situation continues, I have no doubt that we will have no choice but to set up a narrow-based government. Maybe the aides did not make the right calculations. Perhaps they should be sent to some course to learn how. After all, if the Labor Party members were to vote against the state budget, the prime minister would be entitled to fire them and the government would still prevail. If they were to join a vote of no confidence, the government would become a caretaker government without the Alignment ministers. [end recording]

Moda'i: W. Bank, Gaza Federation 'Possibility'

TA111018 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 11 Mar 88 p 2

[Report by Mikha'el Yudelman]

[Text] Minister Without Portfolio Yitzhaq Moda'i said yesterday that he does not exclude the possibility of a federation or confederation in the West Bank and Gaza, and that it was more reasonable to form an Israeli-Palestinian one.

Speaking at a news conference at Bet Sokolov, Moda'i said the Likud is agreed that the territories should not be given sovereignty, but should have an administrative structure similar to the autonomy detailed in the Camp David Accords.

Any minister who obstructs the cabinet's operations should be dismissed, Moda'i stated. He referred to his earlier announcement that there was no point in dismissing only one Labour minister. "They should all be fired," he said.

Moda'i presented what he said was a copy to the "London document," agreed to by Vice Premier Shim'on Peres and Jordan's King Husayn last April. Moda'i charged that Peres had presented it to the government with its beginning and end missing to make it seem like an American proposal. "If that isn't a conspiracy, I don't know what is," he said.

More on Unrest, Related Incidents in Territories

2 Killed on 'Very Tense Day'

TA152001 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Two people were killed today and four others wounded in what turned out to be a very tense day in the territories. The IDF is investigating the circumstances of the two deaths. The first victim, who was killed this morning, was a resident of Dayr Jarir village near the settlement of 'Ofra. A doctor from Al-Maqasid Hospital on the Mount of Olives told our police affairs correspondent that the victim was hit in the head by a bullet.

The second victim was a resident of the village of Jarba near Janin, in the Sanur Valley. Our military affairs correspondent notes that no demonstrations or disturbances took place in this area. The IDF is investigating the circumstances of the man's death.

Overseas Phone Links Cut

TA160538 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] The Civil Administration in the territories last night cut direct telephone links between the territories and foreign countries. No reason has been given for the move. Our reporter says the step is apparently intended to prevent PLO members in Europe from sending messages to residents of the territories.

The Civil Administration is continuing to withhold fuel supplies to Arab-owned petrol stations in the territories, and is still imposing restrictions on residents of the territories wishing to travel abroad.

An overnight curfew was again imposed on the Gaza Strip last night.

There were several disturbances last night in the Jerusalem area. Near Herod's Gate in the old city, a border police patrol was stoned. No one was hurt and no damage was caused.

At the village of Al-'Ubaydiyat in the northern part of the capital, youths burned tires. Police arrived on the scene and arrested four people. A tire was also burned in the village of Silwan near the old city's Dung Gate. Afterward the police carried out searches.

Settlers Petition Rabin

TA160652 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Report by 'Eran Ben-Porat]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] There were a few disturbances last night. Molotov cocktails were thrown in Hebron and Samaria. Two of the Molotov cocktails were thrown at Beni Katzover, the head of the Shomron Regional Council, as he was traveling on the Allon road. Nobody was hurt and no damage was caused. [passage omitted]

Ferment is growing among the Jewish inhabitants of Judaea and Samaria. It seems they are discontented with the policy adopted by the IDF to safeguard the roads. The Nabulus-Qalqilyah road was blocked by rioters yesterday and this disrupted the travel of students from Jewish settlements to their schools. Last night the settlers' information center sent the defense minister a petition, signed by 7,000 people, calling on him to put an immediate stop to the legal proceedings against the four suspected of having tortured Arabs in Nabulus. According to the petition, trying these suspects discourages the IDF from confronting rioters. [passage omitted]

1 Killed in 'Serious Riot'

TA161240 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] There was a serious riot at the Nur al-Shams refugee camp near Tulkarm at noon, and at least two people were wounded. The two were hospitalized in Nabulus, but were later moved to Israeli hospitals. One man, aged about 60, died in a Tulkarm hospital following the riot, but the cause of death is still unknown.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1230 GMT on 16 March adds that "Arab sources claim that the man was asphyxiated after inhaling tear gas."]

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the riot began when inhabitants of the refugee camp tried to dismantle a fence set up by the army along the adjacent main road.

The security forces have imposed a curfew on a section of the Rafah refugee camp in order to prevent riots. There were disturbances in the Gaza Strip today, especially in the town of Gaza, but the curfew imposed on the Gaza Strip has shown results. There were few incidents of vandalism, while the number of complaints about threats to those working in Israel has declined.

The general strike in Judaea and Samaria continues, and very few left for work in Israel.

Jerusalem Tax Rebellion Feared

TA132000 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 13 Mar 88 p 2

[Report by Jerusalem correspondent Nadav Shragay]

[Text] The Municipality of Jerusalem is worried about a tax rebellion by the Arabs in the eastern part of the city. Most Arabs in East Jerusalem, about one third of the city's population, have not yet paid their municipal taxes although in previous years they would have ordinarily paid their debts by now.

Also, they have almost stopped sending in payments to the National Insurance Institute [NII] in the last few months. NII personnel are going to East Jerusalem to collect debts.

A partial solution to the problem is provided by the massive presence of Israeli police in the villages and neighborhoods of Jerusalem. Policemen manning roadblocks in the Arab neighborhoods have lists of names of people who have not paid their income and municipal taxes, parking tickets, and other levies. Anybody passing through the roadblocks whose name appears on the list is arrested by the police and forced to pay his debts.

Review of Events Since Dec

TA151218 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 15 Mar 88 p 2

[Report by Avi Bnayahu]

[Text] Eight hand grenades have been hurled at Israelis in the territories since the start of the uprising in early December. Seven of them were thrown at IDF units, according to official figures released by the Operations Branch of the IDF General Staff.

A review of events from 9 December to the beginning of this week shows that security forces dealt with 4,454 incidents in the West Bank and 1,303 in the Gaza Strip.

The events can be divided into two categories: disturbances and violent demonstrations; and the use of firearms and other weapons. Some 362 incidents in the West Bank during the unrest have been defined as involving warfare materiel. These include: shootings, hurling of grenades, Molotov cocktails, roadside bombs, and arson. Another 133 incidents of this type were recorded in the Gaza Strip.

IDF and military industries teams are continuing to work on developing means of warfare to deal effectively with the demonstrations and disturbances in the territories. The army is studying a series of new measures in this field.

The IDF plans to finance its continued deployment in the territories by a budgetary allocation that will be included in its working plan for 1988. It seems that the IDF will have to cover the cost of dealing with the "intifadha" [Arabic for uprising] in the territories out of its regular budget, and this will come at the expense of other items.

IDF Strategic Weakness in Territories Detailed

TA131900 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 13 Mar 88 p 7

[Article by Yoram Peri: "All the Fish Are in the Water"]

[Text] What was astounding about the IDF's hold on the territories for 20 years was the small number of soldiers in the area. Since 1967 the military authorities settled for less than 1,000 soldiers to supervise a population of more than 1 million Palestinians.

One can discern the scope of the uprising from the fact that since 9 December 1987 the army has had to increase its force there by 4 or 5 times. Moreover, according to plans, riot control [last two words in English] equipment sufficient for an entire year was stored in IDF warehouses. This stock ran out within several weeks after the beginning of the intifadha [uprising in Arabic], and it was necessary to fly in additional equipment from abroad. This is also food for thought for those who boast of our political independence: not an airlift against Syrian and Egyptian divisions as in the Yom Kippur War, but measures against demonstrators and stone throwers.

To the IDF's credit it should be said that as in the past, this time too it learned how to shave quickly, even though using its own beard. The IDF drew its first lesson from its huge use of live ammunition during the first days, a result of having a few soldiers run into a stormy mass: to increase the size of its force at every point of friction. When it transpired that the rebels were gaining an advantage by throwing stones from a distance, taking advantage of the fact that the IDF was not using arms, it was decided to establish physical contact with them, using clubs to cause them limited bodily harm. This was Rabin's "storm into them" motto.

Adapting to this tactical principle was neither easy nor simple, and since it came after weeks of restraint in the face of provocations it entailed an exaggerated—occasionally unnecessary and illegal—use of force, and not only in exceptional cases. Still, public criticism in Israel and overseas—in this sense the media, in the final analysis, did a good, effective, and blessed service for the IDF—acted as a brake on unrestrained violent outbursts among the soldiers.

Whoever followed senior commanders in the territories could see how very sensitive (there are always exceptions) they are to this subject, and not so much for moral reasons or due to being left-wing in orientation. The institutional interests of the military organizations call for this. 'Amram Mitzna', commander of the Central Command, defined this well when he warned his officers: "The IDF will not be a mob army."

The IDF is now facing a new stage, consisting of deploying for protracted warfare against rebellion. This entails a much more massive stay in the territories with all that this involves. Regular work and training programs have been changed. Reservists will be called for periods of service longer than 40 days. New units are being set up in the framework of the border police. And recruits and from now on fresh soldiers will be trained in riot control. [last two words in English] The IDF, which was not an occupation army in 1967, will definitely be one from now on.

Also, the army has adapted to the new warfare from the logistics point of view. New crowd dispersal means that obviate the need for physical contact between rioters and soldiers were introduced in the last few days: a gravel cannon, and cannons for spraying water, paint, and odorous material. Additional, as yet unpublished equipment, that will enable the soldiers to operate beyond the reach of stones, will go into use. Speaking to the IDF top echelon today, one can discern a hint of optimism about their ability to achieve the operational targets they set for themselves within a short period of time: dispersing demonstrations as soon as they start, protecting the roads in the territories, and providing security to Jewish settlers there.

But these conversations reveal another, worrying fact. The IDF is so busy with tactics that its mind is off the strategic problem, at least for now. The right tactics and tools may enable the IDF to reconquer the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but not to hold on to them. To do that something else is needed, and fast.

What ensured Israel's rule over the territories for 20 years were not the Golani, Giv'ati [elite corps of IDF] paratroopers, and Nahal Brigade soldiers but more sophisticated means of social control—a tight network of agents who reported to the authorities anything that took place anywhere, the Shin Bet's means of control and punishment, a traditional leadership that restrained the local population despite its opposition to the occupation, and administrative carrot-and-stick measures in everyday life.

These means were good enough for a population that was used to foreign rulers (Ottoman, British, Jordanian) and to accepting them. At most they upheld the notion of "tzumud," holding onto the land in spite of hardships.

The aim of the intifadha is to break down Israel's control system, to make the occupation very costly for the rulers. And indeed, the Shin Bet lost a great deal of its deterrence. Collaborators began fearing for their lives after the Qabatiyah lynching and have since then "repented." Moderate elements once again hesitate to express their position. There have been too many classical incidents of civil disobedience lately, such as the resignation of policemen and administrative workers and a drastic drop in tax payments.

The Civilian Administration is trying to fight the erosion of Israel's rule by increasing its pressure through a carrot-and-stick technique, but the population is not responding the way it used to. It has grown up and is willing to endure the suffering. It is hard to tell how this covert struggle will develop, but it is no less important to the fate of control over the territory than the overt war taking place in the streets between the soldiers and the uprisers.

The fact that at the present stage the revolutionary thesis has beaten the IDF's countertactics is cause for concern. As far back as 1967, Moshe Dayan defined the fulfillment of the anti-guerrilla principle of "distinguishing the fish from the water" as one of the objectives of the Israeli authorities. The aim of the guerrillas is to get the population on their side against the foreign force. It is only when the local population assists them that they can move as free as fish in water (Mao used this image to establish this principle) and beat the stronger foreign power.

Dayan and successive government officials stated that our aim is to distinguish the fish from the water. We will beat the terrorists and enable the rest of the population to live a normal life and even improve it, so that it is not in its interests to assist the guerrillas. This concept is the basis of the principle of localized punishment, as opposed to collective punishment, and the principle of an enlightened occupation that Moshe Dayan and his disciples were so persistent in maintaining.

This story is over and done with. Since December the leaders of the revolutionary war in the territories have managed to eliminate the distinction between the fish and the water, and even though they have been only partially successful, the IDF's countermeasures have helped them. Revolutionary wars are forever dialectic ones, and the means the IDF employed have brought more and more once-passive residents into the circle of hostility. For example, never since 1967 have so many people been under such long curfews as in the past 3 months.

The dialectic result is that even though the IDF is managing to restore its deterrence, it is causing a larger number of people to rebel against it, which in turn requires more and more resources. Technically, control can be regained, but the cost is getting heavier.

King Leaves for Saudi Arabia, YAR 16 Mar

JN161041 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn left Amman today for Saudi Arabia and the YAR on a working visit during which he will hold talks with Saudi King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, and YAR President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. The talks will deal with recent developments in the Middle East.

His Majesty King Husayn's visit is within the framework of coordination and consultation between His Majesty King Husayn and his brother Arab leaders on recent developments in the Arab region, particularly the valiant uprising of the kinfolk in the occupied Arab territories, and the efforts being exerted to hold an international conference for peace in light of recent U.S. proposals to acheive a peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis. His majesty's talks will also deal with recent developments in the Iraq-Iran war and efforts to end it.

His majesty was seen off by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the Senate president, the House of Representatives speaker, the Royal Court chief, the deputy prime minister, the ministers, the chief of the royal household, the secretary general of the Royal Court, a number of government and military officials, and the YAR ambassador in Amman. A delegation including Prime Minister Zayd al- Rifa'i, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd ibn Zayd, and Information Minister Dr Hani al-Khasawinah accompanied his majesty.

His Highness Crown Prince Hasan took the constitutional oath before His Majesty King Husayn and in the presence of the Cabinet as regent during his majesty's absence from the homeland.

The Saudi ambassador to Amman left on the same plane.

Husayn Reportedly Declines Visit to U.S.

JN160935 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 14 Mar 88 pp 1, 23

[By Rakan al-Majali]

[Excerpt] Amman—AL-QABAS has learned that King Husayn of Jordan has declined to accept an invitation to visit the United States at present. Diplomatic sources in Amman said U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz conveyed this invitation during his last visit to the region. The Jordanian monarch is seeking to crystallize a unified Arab stand after completing his talks and contacts with Syria, Egypt, and the PLO so the Arabs will have a definite, written reply to the U.S. initiativbe. However, this reply will not come before learing the Israeli viewpoint and the U.S. position on Israel's rejection of the initiative. [passage omitted]

PLO's Khalil al-Wazir Departs Amman 14 Mar

JN151314 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, left Amman last night at the conclusion of a week-long visit to Jordan during which he presided over the Palestinian side to the joint Jordanian-Palestinian committee meetings which were held last week to study ways to bolster the steadfastness of the people in the occupied territories.

In a statement to AFP, Abu Jihad confirmed that Yasir 'Arafat has received an official invitation from the Soviet leadership to visit Moscow. He added that a Soviet envoy will arrive in Tunis within the next 2 days to meet with 'Arafat and fix an official date for this visit.

Public, Private Sector Support Aids 'Uprising'

JN150938 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 15 Mar 88 pp 1, 5

[By Sa'd G. Hattar]

[Text] Amman—As the Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza enters its fourth month, thousands of dinars are being poured into the occupied territories from Jordan to sustain the momentum of the revolt. The public and private sectors, operating separately, have funnelled approximately JD 300,000 for the Palestinians under occupation in the form of monthly assistance to families of those who were killed, injured or detained since Dec. 9. The public sector campaign is coordinated by the Zakat Fund, an alms-to-the-poor fund-collecting body affiliated with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, while the private sector effort is spearheaded by a committee grouping professional, trade and labour associations and leading Jordanian personalities.

Zakat Fund Director Mahmud 'Allawi told the JORDAN TIMES that the fund had already channelled JD 30,000 in monthly assistance to families of martyrs. The amount of monthly aid ranges between JD 50 and JD 85, depending on the social status and other related aspects of the family in question, 'Allawi said. The fund's list of beneficiaries is updated on a daily basis as more and more Palestinians are killed or wounded each day.

'Allawi said the Zakat Fund was also financially supporting those West Bankers and Gazans studying in Jordan's four universities who have lost their sources of income in the occupied territories. The fund paid JD 50 each in January to 1,000 students, raising the fund's overall contribution to nearly JD 80,000. 'Allawi said public contributions collected by the fund fell quite short of the needs and planned allocations.

Though affiliated with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the fund operates independently from the ministry. Its funds are generated from individual contributions in conformity with Islamic law.

'Allawi said that the fund runs affiliated groups in both banks for the collection and distribution of funds. He noted that the ministry spends half of it JD 10 million budget in the West Bank.

'Allawi indicated he was not in favour of the parallel private sector effort. The most feasible and practically sound way of supporting the uprising is for the private sector to coordinate and join efforts with the fund, he said.

The private sector "Popular Committee for the Steadfastness of the Uprising" has collected approximately JD 500,000 and already channelled half of the amount into the occupied territories, according to its Secretary General Mamduh 'Abbadi. The committee is headed by Arab Bank Chairman 'Abd al-Majid Shuman.

'Abbadi, president of the Jordan Medical Association (JMA), defended the committee's independent effort saying its operations were accurately reaching the desired targets in the occupied territories. He dismissed possible duplication of channelled funds saying that the families of martyrs deserved all what they received.

'Abbadi said the committee's activities included individual contributions, public rallies and fund-raising events. He said several private organisations, professional associations and banks had allotted one day, or more, of staff salaries. The contributions are tax deductible.

The JMA alone collected JD 60,000 during the first week of the uprising, creating the nucleus of the committee, which has a 12-member executive committee and a 100-member general assembly 'Abbadi said.

The committee's objective is funding humanitarian and medical efforts; it has alreay paid JD 1,000 to the family of every martyr and JD 200 to every injured Palestinian. Furthermore, the committee has contributed JD 75,000 to West Bank and Gaza hospitals and medical centres, families of detainees and charitable societies, 'Abbadi, said. The committee is seeking to send 12 ambulances to the occupied territories with the help of various international organisations, he added.

The committee is dedicated to maintaining support for the Palestinians under occupation so long as the uprising sustained, 'Abbadi said. The committee receives an average of JD 100,000 in contributions every week, he added.

Housing Loans for West Bank, Gaza Reviewed

*JN151941 Amman Domestic Service in English
1700 GMT 15 Mar 88*

[Text] The secretary general of the Jordanian-Palestinian joint committee announced that it looked into housing loans due on beneficiaries in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. He said the committee decided to consider the loans given to families of both the martyrs and the prisoners who actually spent years in jails as unrefundable. The decisions also waived the payment of housing loans installments due on Palestinians in the occupied Arab land until December 31st 1989. A decision was also reached to reschedule all current and future loans to the citizens in the occupied Arab territories for a period of 25 years rather than 15 years.

Further Reportage on Higgins Kidnapping

Abductors Said Former Amal

NC160549 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0523 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Party sources in West Beirut have declared that, except for the group's leader, the abductors of U.S. officer Higgins are all former members of the Amal Movement. The sources add that the Iranian Embassy and Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din are exerting efforts to eliminate the tension which has prevailed between Amal and Hizballah since the kidnapping incident.

Kidnappers 'Pledged' Release

NC160849 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 14 Mar 88 p 6

[Text] Highly informed sources in southern Lebanon have said that during secret contacts with various local and regional parties, the kidnappers of U.S. officer William Higgins, head of the UN truce observers team in the south, pledged to release him. The sources did not reveal the approximate date for the release, pointing out that this matter is up to the kidnappers. The sources also assert that the important thing is making the decision to release Higgins. This is similar to the case of FRG hostage Ralph Schray, who was released last week.

U.S. Release Efforts Viewed

NC161035 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 14 Mar 88 p 8

[Text] While the U.S. aircraft carrier "Coral Sea" was still in the waters off Haifa, five of its affiliated warships were patrolling the international waters off the Lebanese coast on a multi-task mission. Some of their tasks were:

1. To gather information on U.S. officer Lieutenant Colonel William Richard Higgins, head of the UN truce observers group in southern Lebanon, as well as on the whereabouts of the other hostages.

2. To prepare for direct intervention in Higgins' release, once his location was determined. A special commando unit has been put on maximum alert for immediate intervention upon request. There had been talk about a U.S. military operation, scheduled for 24 February, and later for 29 February. However, this operation did not materialize due to the inaccuracy of the U.S. authorities' information on the fate and location of Higgins.

3. To ensure full protection for U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and his accompanying delegation during his recent series of meetings in the region, by receiving up-to-date information on his schedule, activities, and the security measures accompanying his movement.

According to available information, Israeli intelligence in the south also became involved in the Higgins issue. A U.S.-Israeli-international field operations room was set up in Al-Naqurah to follow the news about Higgins and to seek information on his whereabouts. This room is under the authority of another operations center aboard the U.S. aircraft carrier "Coral Sea," anchored in the port of Haifa, which sorts out and verifies the information and issues orders accordingly.

There has been little information regarding the fate of the "Coral Sea" after Secretary Shultz left the region. However, sources indicate that the U.S. military presence in the Mediterranean, particularly off the Syrian, Lebanese, Israeli, and even Egyptian shores, will remain in effect and at its current intensiveness. Right now there is a U.S. diplomatic offensive regarding the situation in Lebanon, the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the Iraq-Iran war, especially since the resumption of the war of the cities.

Informed sources say that the U.S. military presence in the Mediterranean is primarily meant to gather intelligence, and secondly to serve as a strike force. The purpose of this costly and exhaustive concentration of personel is to ensure the success of U.S. initiatives on the region's crises.

According to a highly confidential diplomatic report, President Reagan's administration has admitted that it committed a gross error in departing Lebanon with other members of the multinational force, after having peacefully entered Beirut and established sensitive and strategic positions. The report refers to several negative aspects which have resulted from the U.S. decision to terminate its military presence within the framework of the multinational force, including:

1. The emergence of the issue of hostages, particularly the American hostages, detained in Beirut. The report quotes U.S. military sources as saying there would have been no hostages had the U.S. and European presence continued in Lebanon; if such an issue had emerged, it could have been dealt with differently.

2. The United States would have maintained its prestige, reputation, and credibility in Lebanon and the region had it kept an effective military presence in Beirut. By withdrawing its military forces, the United States paid an exorbitant material and moral price, and its prestige sharply declined.

3. The United States discovered that following the abrogation of the 17 May Agreement, it was necessary to comprehensively evaluate its policy in the region and to evaluate its method of handling crises and problems. Had its role remained unchanged, the United States would have spared itself much effort and endurance; it would not have, nor would it continue to, sustain blows from various local and regional parties.

French Envoy on Al-Jumayyil's Hostage Remarks

NC161232 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic
1130 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] French Ambassador Paul Blanc met with Maronite Patriarch Sfayr today. After the meeting, the ambassador said that the Syrian-American talks have begun to take a positive turn. The French Government is not far from this issue, he said, adding that it is working here in Lebanon and also in France to help narrow the differences in views.

Asked about his views on President al-Jumayyil's suggestion for the release of the French hostages, Ambassador Blanc said: We are working in a different way. We proved the success of this method in the past when we succeeded in freeing four hostages. We are working today to free the remaining hostages.

Syrian Defense Minister Arrives on Sudden Visit

NC161149 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic
1130 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Syrian Defense Minister General Mustafa Talas arrived in Beirut at 1130 this morning on board a private Syrian plane. The plane landed at Beirut Airport amid strict security measures. The nature of the surprise visit is not known. However, political circles in Lebanon expect such high level Syrian efforts to seek out the Lebanese opposition leaders' views on the regime's explanation of their remarks about its reformative document.

Inspects Syrian Forces, Departs

NC161407 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic
1400 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Syrian Defense Minister General Mustafa Talas left Beirut this afternoon after inspecting the Arab Syrian forces operating in Lebanon.

Syria's General Kan'an Arrives in Beirut

NC161525 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 1445 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] A Syrian source in Lebanon has reported that Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, head of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon, has arrived in Beirut. The source added that he is scheduled to meet with acting Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss, Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, Minister Nabih Birri, and will later travel to Al-Mukhtarah to confer with Minister Walid Junblatt. He will be conveying to these four officials President al-Jumayyil's response to their observations on his reform plan.

Nationalist Parties Reject Al-Jumayyil Proposal

NC151759 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic
1630 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] The nationalist parties and forces today declared their rejection of President al-Jumayyil's reform proposals. They are regarded as a continuation of the president's previous stand. During a meeting held at the office of 'Asim Qansuh, regional secretary of the Ba'th Party Organization in Lebanon, the nationalist parties and forces called for implementing the National Democratic Front project and for establishing its organizational frameworks on the political, economic, and social levels. This project is capable of rescuing the people and the homeland from hardships and tragedies.

The parties have regarded the recent U.S. moves as a revival of the Camp David accords, only in a new form. They emphasized the need to abort these schemes. The conferees decided to announce the formation of a national organization for supporting the uprising in the occupied territories, Arab Egypt's revolution, and the nationalist resistance in the south. The announcement will be made at the Carlton Hotel on Thursday, 24 March.

Ja'ja' Rules Out Accord Before Elections

NC121938 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic
1145 GMT 12 Mar 88

[Text] AL-SHIRA' magazine has conducted a lengthy interview with Lebanese Forces Commander Dr Samir Ja'ja'. The interview basically revolves around one fundamental point: We are ready for a dialogue with all parties in West Beirut whose circumstances permit them to undertake such a dialogue; everything is open to discussion and negotiation, except the Syrian presence in Lebanon.

Dr Ja'ja' expressed regret that the question of reconciliation has not been raised in a serious manner. He said he found it surprising that this issue is being brought up at this particular time. He ruled out the possibility of any reconciliation before the elections as it would be difficult, indeed impossible, to drive the foreign armies out of Lebanon within a period of 3 months. Ja'ja' pointed out that the calls for reconciliation are not serious because the necessary domestic conditions do not exist, and many foreign parties are seeking to prevent reconciliation.

He said: As far as we are concerned, liberation is the key to any future reconciliation process. Ja'ja' proposed an alternative; that is, an agreement to hold the elections and an agreement on the presidential candidate. Every candidate has his own program, he said.

He dismissed as groundless rumors of an accord for a solution, denying all knowledge of any serious plan by President al-Jumayyil. He described what is going on now as a waste of time.

The Lebanese Forces commander said that this election will not be an ordinary one. It will have a very profound effect on the state, he declared. Therefore, he added, a different, precise, and responsible approach should be adopted. He went on: We will allow no manipulation of the presidential election at all, whatever the cost may be. There are red lines, and we will not permit anyone to trespass beyond them.

Discussing his position on Dany Sham'un's candidacy in the presidential election, Dr Ja'ja' said that the National Liberal Party leader is the Christian leader who is closest to the Lebanese Forces. However, he noted, that any decision on the issue lies with the Lebanese Front, which comprises the nucleus of the political forces in East Beirut.

Ja'ja' described the Lebanese Forces' relations with the Army as natural. He said that, directly or indirectly, the Army serves the political plan advocated by the free political forces and is deployed along the same front and contact lines. He stated: We defend the Army and the Army defends us, which means that we stand together with legitimacy. He said that relations with President al-Jumayyil are characterized by understanding and coordination. He affirmed that consultations with Bkirki are continuing, and that whatever Bkirki wants with regard to the future and system of Lebanon is acceptable to the Lebanese Forces.

Ja'ja' declared his rejection of the 1943 formula, calling for a new and stable plan that takes account of reality and secures the right of every Lebanese group to exist. This, he noted, can only be achieved by a plan for political decentralization. This does not necessarily mean partition. The new formula, Ja'ja' explained, should be based on Christian-Islamic numbers, not merely on Maronite-Sunnite numbers as was the case in 1943. He rejected the idea of changing this Maronite-Sunnite equation into a Maronite-Shi'ite or Maronite-Druze one.

Dr Ja'ja' called for the real causes of the crisis to be dealt with. The militias are not the cause of the crisis, and the proposed administration for Beirut is not the solution. The problem lies in the occupations. The key to the solution is the withdrawal of foreign armies, he declared. In calling for this withdrawal, Ja'ja' added, the Lebanese Forces do not distinguish between one occupier and another.

He stated: I do not say that we should drive the Syrians out and bring in the Americans. If we are to bring in anyone, let it be UN forces. We could deploy them in such a way so that they could control the situation, which would enable us to sit down at the negotiating table.

Muslim Scholars Grouping Said 'Dissolved'

NC131758 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1715 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Text] Quoting a Hizballah official the CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY reports that Iran has dissolved the Muslim scholars grouping, headed by Shaykh Mahir Mahmud, because it had adopted an independent policy.

A grouping official has responded to the statement by the Hizballah official, saying: There are several reasons why the Muslim scholars grouping has not met, including the fact that Iran has decided to place all its resources at the disposal of Hizballah, which is well organized. Moreover, Iran, which supported the formation of the scholars grouping, has sought to keep the grouping overt, while Hizballah will remain covert.

Musawi Ridicules Talk of Al-Sadr Appearance

NC160723 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 0545 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Islamic Amal Movement official Husayn al-Musawi has declared that what Ayatollah Rohani said about the appearance of Imam Musa al-Sadr is a mere rumor fabricated in the interests of hostile elements. He added that the date fixed by Rohani for Al-Sadr's reappearance has expired and that Rohani has now fixed another date. Al-Musawi said that the whole exercise is no more than a game of playing with people's emotions.

Katyushas Reportedly Fired on Upper Galilee

NC161553 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1515 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Violent clashes broke out along the Buslayya-Jabal Safi axis at noon today between the South Lebanese Army [SLA] and extremist gunmen. Preliminary reports indicate that at least five extremists were killed, and that the clashes are continuing. A short time ago we learned that at 1630 several shells fell in the town of Mashgharah. There have been no casuality reports.

In another development, a security source in the south has said that two katyushas were fired on northern Israel this morning. The rockets fell in the area north of Nahariyya in Upper Galilee. They were fired from southwestern Lebanon outside the security belt area.

Amal Members, Syrians Clash at Checkpoint

NC160710 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 0545 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] In the western Al-Biqa', Islamic Amal Movement member Muhammad 'Abdallah 'Ammar was seriously wounded and his companion Rif'at 'Abdallah 'Ammar injured during a clash yesterday with personnel manning a joint Syrian occupation forces-Army 1st Brigade checkpoint in the town of Masgharah.

Following the clash, a state of general alert was called in Amal's ranks, gunmen appeared on the scene, and roads were blockaded. Sounds of an explosion and machine-gun fire were heard in the vicinity of the checkpoint.

Further on Deaths of Palestinians in Tyre

PFLP Accuses Amal of Killings

NC151728 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] According to information received this afternoon, Mahmud Khalil Mustafa and his son Husam, who were killed last night at the entrance to Al-Buss Camp in Tyre, were Palestinians. It was also reported that Mahmud Mustafa was an UNRWA teacher. An UNRWA source in Beirut confirmed today that Mustafa worked for the agency, but did not specify in what capacity or the circumstances of his death. The PFLP accused the Amal Movement of perpetrating the killing.

Amal Detains 15 From Camp

NC152105 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 2045 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] According to security information received from the south, a state of alert prevails in the ranks of the Amal Movement around the Palestinian camp of Al-Buss in the Tyre area. Meanwhile, Amal groups are conducting attack operations inside the camp and have detained 15 persons so far. This follows the assassination of Palestinian UNRWA employee Khalil Mustafa and his son, and the PFLP's accusing Amal of being behind it.

Lahd Militia Position in South Attacked

NC161118 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpt] A group of the Martyr Kamal Junblatt forces of the National Resistance attacked an agent Lahd militia position in the Burkat Shwayya area at dawn today, using various types of rocket and automatic weapons. The attack lasted about 30 minutes.

Using heavy artillery, the Lahd militia opened fire from various positions at the withdrawal route of the group, which prompted the Martyr Kamal Junblatt forces to shell the agent Lahd militia barracks in Zaghlah. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Government Statement Issued on Geneva Talks

LD151659 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Statement by the state of the Republic of Afghanistan:

The people of Afghanistan follow with great interest the process of talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan, which are being conducted through the special envoy of the UN secretary general in Geneva. Our compatriots, the citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan, as well as those who, due to various reasons, are living in hardship, are linking all their hopes and thoughts to the rapid establishment of peace, stability, and accord in the persecuted Afghan land.

The situation which had come about on the eve of the present round of talks in Geneva created the circumstances for this round to be the final one so that the people of Afghanistan would achieve peace, and the neighboring countries and humanity as a whole would be freed from one of the most difficult and painful regional disputes. This optimism was based on the realistic and constructive stand of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, which was heard in the statements of Esteemed Najibullah and Esteemed Gorbachev, dated 20 Dalw, corresponding to 8 February of the current year.

As is known, in order to successfully and quickly conclude the talks in Geneva, these statements set a specific date for the limited Soviet contingents to withdraw on 15 May 1988. Undoubtedly we are waiting for the Pakistani side, too, to show a sense of responsibility and political objectivity in the talks and to choose a stand to allow the Afghanistan knot to be untied. It is worth mentioning that the Pakistani side always linked the signing of the documents concerning the normalization of the situation with the period of the withdrawal of the Soviet units.

The Afghan delegation to the Geneva talks, in accordance with their instructions, is trying hard to successfully conclude the talks. The testimony to this matter is the agreement concerning the return of the Soviet contingents within 9 months and the fact that half of these units will withdraw from Afghanistan in 3 months. Unfortunately, however, the Pakistani delegation is creating various artificial obstacles and slowing down the signing of the final agreements. The Pakistani side, in particular, declared that it has no instructions to sign the documents, although the talks were delayed at their request in order for them to receive these instructions. The Pakistani leadership so far is not giving up efforts to linking the signing of the Geneva accords with the creation of the so-called interim government. The Pakistani side as well as the United States, are also imposing a series of conditions which have no relation whatever to the Geneva process and are testimony to their designs on dictating their conditions on Afghanistan regarding the establishment of its reciprocal relations with the Soviet Union.

It is necessary to reemphasize that the problem of national reconciliation and the creation of the coalition government in Afghanistan is not included in the agenda of Geneva talks and should only be solved by the Afghans themselves. They are capable of remaining on opposing sides without any interference from abroad. The Afghan-Pakistani talks from the very beginning aimed at a political settlement of the foreign aspects of the problem of Afghanistan and not the political problems inside the country.

With a stalemate in the negotiations in Geneva, the Pakistani leadership and the United States could of course disrupt this process and in this way prolong the pain and sorrow of the Afghan people. However, no one will be able to turn back the growing process of national reconciliation and the increasing efforts of various strata of our society toward achieving peace and security. In this way, Pakistan has lost the historic chance to establish normal relations with Afghanistan and cooperate in the region. This darkens the hopes of all people of the world who are trying to improve the international situation.

Pakistan and the United States, by postponing the signing of the Geneva agreements under artificial pretexts, are mistaken if they believe the Soviet forces will still withdraw beginning on 15 May. But according to the agreement already reached in Geneva, all the documents, including the document concerning the return of the Soviet forces, envisages that their withdrawal will be initiated 60 days after they are signed.

Therefore, those who intend to postpone the signing of the agreement, which will naturally result in the postponement of the return of the Soviet units, will bear responsibility for this matter. The talks are continuing in Geneva. There is still the possibility that, pursuing sound mind, political realism, and goodwill, a decisive step will be taken toward meeting each other.

'Korea-Style Partition' Not Ruled Out by Rebels

BK151238 Hong Kong AFP in English 1231 GMT
15 Mar 88

[By Sami Zubeiri]

[Text] Islamabad, March 15 (AFP)-The Soviet Union has sent military equipment and advisors to Afghanistan to beef up the Kabul regime ahead of the signing of a peace accord in Geneva, Western diplomats said here Tuesday. Meanwhile, Kabul's appointment of a deputy prime minister for the north has exacerbated fears of an attempt to partition Afghanistan, the diplomats said.

Since the beginning of the indirect Geneva talks between Kabul and Islamabad March 2, large amounts of military supplies have been delivered by convoy across the Amu Darya dividing the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, several diplomats said.

"A very large volume of Soviet military supplies has come to Afghanistan via Heratan Port," on the Amu Darya, one diplomat said, adding that "a very large Soviet convoy including ammunition... Trucks with tanks and BMP (multi-purpose armoured vehicle) escorts arrived in northern Afghanistan" on March 4. A squadron of six Soviet aircraft arrived in Kabul over the weekend, including MiG-23s and SU-17s, the diplomats said. The military supplies were delivered to Herat in the west, Qandahar in the south, Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif in the north, one diplomat said.

Diplomats also quoted Eastern European diplomats as saying that Soviet civilian "experts" had arrived in Afghanistan, setting themselves up in provincial towns to provide grassroots assistance to the Kabul regime. The Soviet Union had apparently stepped up military supplies to Afghanistan in a bid to strengthen the Kabul regime before an accord is signed in Geneva, Afghan analysts said.

Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev announced February 8 that the Soviet Union would start withdrawing its estimated 115,000 troops from Afghanistan May 15 if an accord was signed in Geneva by March 15, observers noted. Kabul and Islamabad have agreed on a nine-month timetable for a Soviet withdrawal but are deadlocked over Pakistan's demand for a transitional Afghan government in time for the pullout. The agreement includes guarantees for an end to foreign interference in Afghanistan.

Soviet troops had also been moved to Feyzabad in Badakshan and Talukan in Takhar, which border the Soviet Union, in a bid to make northern Afghanistan roads and highways "more secure," the diplomats said. These highways will be used by withdrawing Soviet troops.

Meanwhile, the official Afghan press reported Sunday that the Kabul regime had appointed Najibullah Masir to the new post of deputy prime minister "for the north." It said Mr. Masir would deal exclusively with matters relating to northern Afghanistan. Diplomats said no such post had been created for other regions and added that the decision "exacerbates fears of an attempt to partition Afghanistan."

There were also reports that Kabul and Moscow planned to split the administration, if not the country, if civil war broke out in Afghanistan after a Soviet troop withdrawal. The Kabul regime, as part of its "fallback plan," has proposed establishing Mazar-e-Sharif as the second capital, sources here said.

They said Muslim rebels were stronger in southern Afghanistan and did not rule out the possibility of a Vietnam or Korea-style partition of the country. The diplomats said a construction team had been sent to Mazar-e-Sharif, which is located close to Heratan.

Mujahidin Commander Says Soviets Must Negotiate

PM141015 London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic
5 Mar 88 pp 8-9

[Interview with mujahidin Kabul District Commander 'Abdul Haq by 'Uthman Mirghani in London; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Mirghani] In view of the fact that you are directing the military operations carried out by the mujahidin in Kabul District, could you give us an idea of the present situation around Kabul?

['Abdul Haq] In view of the fact that Kabul is the capital and the main center for commercial and political activity, the ruling regime has concentrated all its defenses in and around it. In the city there are 3 Soviet divisions and 3 Afghan Army divisions distributed among 1,500 positions inside the city and on its outskirts in order to protect it from our attacks. [passage omitted]

The mujahidin are positioned 20 km from Kabul and are carrying out attacks from four main axis points using the method of rapid hit-and-run raids. Our attacks are aimed at sensitive positions such as the electric power stations, the Soviet Embassy, some factories, and the positions of Afghan and Soviet forces in the outskirts. We have recently escalated and intensified our military operations in the Kabul District aiming at positions inside the capital and on its outskirts. The Afghan and Soviet forces have tried many times to respond to our attacks with counterattacks, which at present are occurring daily. [passage omitted]

[Mirghani] Afghanistan has jumped into the limelight of events following Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's announcement of a plan to withdraw his forces from Afghanistan, if the negotiations in Geneva on securing a formula for a settlement are successful. Reports currently speak of a U.S.-Soviet agreement to settle the Afghan issue within the framework of a new international accord. Have you been a party to the consultations and contacts presently under way to settle the problem?

[Haq] The contacts and mediations are presently going on between Pakistan and the regime in Kabul. The Afghan mujahidin are not a party to them.

[Mirghani] Are we to understand that you have not been consulted on the actual and proposed plans for a settlement?

[Haq] No, nobody has consulted us so far.

[Mirghani] So what is your position then on the Geneva negotiations with regard to the Afghan cause?

[Haq] We reject these negotiations because they do not include us, and we do not see that they will achieve a settlement because they do not include the two main parties to the conflict—the mujahidin movements and the Soviet Union. The present battle raging in Afghanistan is between us and the Soviet Union. The Kabul regime is merely a regime subservient to Moscow.

[Mirghani] Do you not think your rejection of these negotiations may impede the Soviet withdrawal, which is considered one of your aims?

[Haq] We do not believe the Soviets will withdraw from Afghanistan. They want three guarantees before withdrawing. They want Pakistan to close its borders in the face of any activity by the mujahidin movements and they are asking the West and all the other sides to stop backing us as well as wanting the mujahidin movements to stop fighting. We are not fighting just for a Soviet withdrawal but we want to stop Moscow's intervention in Afghan affairs, and we are fighting against communism and its presence in our Muslim country. We will continue fighting until we achieve these aims.

I repeat our belief that the Soviets will not withdraw from Afghanistan. They want guarantees for the communist regime which is subordinate to them in Kabul, which is an impossible demand. If they do not get these guarantees then they will not withdraw; and if they do not withdraw then the war will continue.

[Mirghani] What are your preconditions for negotiations?

[Haq] We do not reject negotiations. However, for the matter to be realized the Soviets have to recognize and accept the mujahidin movement as a principal side and partner which must be present in any efforts for a settlement. If the Soviets want to pull out of the quagmire of Afghanistan they have to realize that they must negotiate with us. The United States will be unable to help them withdraw. Pakistan will be unable to help them withdraw. We are the only side which can help them withdraw, and we are the ones who can enable them to stop the war once the right conditions are achieved. Therefore, it is more advantageous to them to start a dialogue with us instead of resorting to parties unable to decide the issue of war or peace on our behalf. [passage omitted]

[Mirghani] How did the Stinger anti-aircraft missiles reach Iran? Is it true that some groups in the Afghan mujahidin movement have sold some of these missiles to Iran?

[Haq] The mujahidin do not need to sell missiles to Iran since the United States is dealing directly with the Iranians and does not need us as a go-between in this regard. Geographically Afghanistan is a landlocked country, meaning that it does not have any sea ports. It is surrounded on all sides by its neighbors. Therefore we are compelled in our military operations—especially our supply operations—to use the territories of neighboring states such as Iran. In view of some of the difficulties facing our supply operations through Pakistan we are forced to use the Iranian borders as a supply route.

In some cases our convoys have been the targets of Iranian attacks and some clashes have occurred which have lead to the killing of a number of Iranians and Afghans. In one such operation Iran was able to seize a weapon consignment we were taking to Afghanistan. Those consignments contained Stinger missiles, and we did not expect to be attacked by the Iranians. However, it seems that the aim of that operation was that Iran wanted to create problems for the United States by giving the impression that it had obtained Stinger missiles from it, as well as seeking to stir up confusion between the Pakistan-based mujahidin movements and the United States.

Sometimes the media does not strive for accuracy in what they publish. Consequently they circulate reports based on guesswork concerning some Stinger missiles reaching Iran.

[Mirghani] Can a comparison be made between U.S. support for you and its support for the contras who are fighting the regime in Nicaragua?

[Haq] The United States is not backing us because it wants to spread Islam or wants to see an Islamic regime in our country. It is backing us on the basis of its hatred for the Soviet Union and its desire to create problems for it. The United States has its own priorities and its own problems which it puts before our problem. It is focusing its attention on the star wars issue, curbing strategic and short-range nuclear weapons, the Nicaragua issue, the problems of El Salvador, and scores of other matters. Therefore we do not consider ourselves the United States' primary concern, but we fully realize that the United States is backing us because that serves its interests and gives it the opportunity to exact retribution from the Soviet Union for its role in the Vietnam war.

When some people receive aid from the United States they become a toy in its hands. Others maintain the independence of their decision making, not permitting any party to subordinate them just because they have received aid. So we do not allow anyone to usurp our resolve or to expect us to become subordinate to them merely because they are backing us. In an interview with CBS-TV a few minutes before meeting you I said the same thing to them. We always concentrate on what the Afghans want and not on what President Reagan and his administration want.

[Mirghani] What would your relations with the Soviet Union be like if you were to assume power?

[Haq] That depends on Soviet intentions. If they were to leave us to determine our future for ourselves then we would deal with them as a neighboring state which cannot be disregarded. But if they insisted on the presence of a regime subordinate to them in Afghanistan then the problems between us would remain. We have given up hundreds of martyrs and seen 6 million Afghans expelled from their country because of the Soviet Union. It is not easy for us to forget all that and say that we will establish relations of friendship with the Soviet Union once it withdraws from our territory and leaves us to deal with our affairs. We realize that we cannot ignore the establishment of relations with a neighboring state the size of the Soviet Union. What I am driving at is that we can never trust the Soviet Union after all it has done in our country. [passage omitted]

Council of Ministers Meets, Drafts Budget Plan

LD142333 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] A routine plenary session of the Council of Minister was held today. The plan and state budget for the year 1366 [year ending] 20 March and the draft of the socioeconomic development plan and the state budget of the Afghan Republic for next year [year beginning 21 March] were comprehensively discussed.

Mahbubollah Koshani, the deputy prime minister and chairman of the State Planning Committee spoke about the country's socioeconomic development plan. Muhammad Kabir, the minister of finance, presented reports to the meeting concerning the state budget. A number of ministers and heads of state committees expressed their views on the topics discussed.

Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand analyzed the work of the meeting in a detailed speech. In a part of his speech he said: After a few days, the year 1366, a year which will be recorded in the history of our country as the year for practical realization of the policy of national reconciliation, the establishment of peace and stability in our presecuted land, will end. During this year considerable changes have occured in our political, social, and economic life, and great measures have been taken in these areas.

In realizing the policy of national reconciliation, a great role is attached to the solution of the tasks of economic and social growth in the country. The government, under the complex situation which emanated from the undeclared war, has tried to carry out tasks related to the realization of the plans of socioeconomic growth and the state budget. The state plan and budget for the current year, which was directed at raising the level of life of the people of Afghanistan, was drafted and implemented under the present difficult and complex situations in the country. It should be remembered that the current year is indicative of the level of activity of the political leadership of our state at an international level. The questions discussed in the session were closely assessed, and were unanimously approved by the members of the government. The Council of Ministers decided to put forward the 1367 draft socioeconomic development plan and the state budget plan to the Revolutionary Council of the Republic of Afghanistan for approval. A number of legislative documents and the minutes of matters discussed in the Council of Ministers session relating to the 1st day of 1367 were approved.

National Front March Plenum Results Reported

LD130618 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0436 GMT
13 Mar 88

[Text] Kabul, March 12, BAKHTAR—March plenum of National Front studied and discussed the vital questions and made necessary decisions for the final triumph of the process of national reconciliation, said Abdurrahim Hatif, chairman of the Central Council of National Front of Afghanistan in an interview to a BAKHTAR reporter. To achieve this end, necessary changes and amendments were brought to the Constitution of National Front. He expressed conviction that with these changes Afghanistan will have a more powerful National Front.

The plenum made decisions on the most historical subjects and a joint platform was adopted by the participants of the plenum. The platform defined the objectives and domestic duties of the National Front. The international functions of National Front and the latter's approach to opposition were also specified.

The National Front is faced with many problems and difficulties the solution of which a collective consultative is needed. It is for this reason, Abdurrahim Hatif went on to say, that an extensive and extra-ordinary plenum of Central Council of National Front of the Republic of Afghanistan was invited. The policy of national reconciliation has created principled and reliable grounds for unifying the various forces of the country and the National Front considers this as its duty to make every efforts to achieve this end, said Abdurrahim Hatif.

Bangladesh

Bombing Kills 1, Injures 2 in Dhaka District

BK161036 Hong Kong AFP in English 1023 GMT
16 Mar 88

[Text] Dhaka, March 16 (AFP)—A bomb has killed one woman and injured two people in the Bangladesh capital, police said here Wednesday. The blast, possibly caused by a homemade bomb, rocked a house in Dhaka's Lalbagh District late Tuesday, killing a 40-year-old woman and seriously injuring her son and another man, the police said.

Foreign Minister Leaves for Bangkok Meeting

BK151301 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] The second session of the Bangladesh-Thailand Joint Commission begins in Bangkok tomorrow. The Bangladesh foreign minister, Mr Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, left Dhaka for the Thai capital to attend the session. The joint commission will focus on bilateral trade and economic cooperation and explore new avenues of cooperation.

India

Upper House Passes Punjab Emergency Bill

BK151259 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] The Rajya Sabha has passed the 59th Constitution amendment bill which seeks to provide for proclamation of emergency in Punjab on the ground of internal disturbance. It also seeks to amend Article 356-5 to provide for promulgation of president's rule in the state for a period of up to 3 years to deal with the situation. All the 157 members present in the House voted in favor of the bill. The opposition earlier walked out shouting slogans. They were protesting against the passage of the bill after participating in the clause-by-clause consideration.

Amendments to Clause 3 of the bill moved by the government were approved by the House to make it absolutely clear that the proclamation of emergency on the grounds of internal disturbance can be made if the integrity of India is threatened in any part of the territory of Punjab. The government brought this amendment to allay the apprehensions of the opposition that emergency can be evoked in any part of the country.

The home minister, Mr Buta Singh, while replying to the debate, reiterated government's firm resolve to stamp out terrorism from Punjab and asserted that attempts to raise the bogey of Khalistan would be effectively rooted out.

Further on Opposition-Sponsored Strike

Only 'Few States' Affected

BK151317 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Barring a few states, the opposition-sponsored bharat bundh [countrywide strike] did not affect the normal life of the common man in other parts of the country. The states which were most affected by the bundh were Kerala, West Bengal, Bihar, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.

In the capital, the bundh did not affect daily life. DTC [Delhi Transport Corporation] buses and other public vehicles plied as usual. AIR correspondents who went round the city say that shops and business establishments as well as industrial units functioned normally. Educational institutions and government offices reported normal attendance. The central board of secondary education examinations were held as scheduled.

In West Bengal, the 24-hour bundh call which began at 0600 this morning has disrupted normal life. Buses and trams remained off the road. Taxis and buses are also not plying. Train services both in eastern and southeastern railways have been paralyzed following squatting on tracks. There are some reports of stray incidents. Bomb throwing and clashes between the supporters and opponents of the bundh took place at a few places. A clash took place at the premises of a public sector undertaking at Howrah.

In Kerala, shops, hotels, and business establishments remained closed at most of the places. Rail and road transport has been severely affected throughout the state. The road transport corporation has withdrawn its bus services. Train services were disrupted as a result of picketing at almost all major junctions. A number of long distance trains could not leave Trivandrum. In Trivandrum three vehicles belonging to Doordarshan [television network] were attacked by a group of 150 persons.

In Karnataka, public transport buses were off the road and shops remained closed in several cities and towns. In Bangalore, only a few autorickshaws were seen plying. Train services are reported unaffected. In Andhra Pradesh, normal life has been affected at a number of places. In Bihar, shops remained closed in all the major markets in Patna. In other cities of the country, life was largely unaffected.

AFP: 150,000 Arrested

BK151510 Hong Kong AFP in English 1453 GMT 15 Mar 88

[By Anil Penna]

[Excerpts] New Delhi, March 15 (AFP)—Police arrested 150,000 opposition workers in a bid to break a nationwide general strike Tuesday aimed at forcing Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's resignation and early elections, the opposition said. Opposition supporters were arrested across the country, an opposition spokesman said, as reports signalled only partial success for the one-day strike called by eight political parties. Police shot dead one person and injured several others in the Ranchi District of eastern Bihar State in a bid to disperse activists enforcing the strike, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA said.

Strikers hurled bombs at shops in Agartala, capital of the north-eastern state of Tripura, but no casualties were mentioned. Police baton charges on rock-throwing protestors were reported from New Delhi, Madras and Bombay. Government officials here would not say how many had been arrested, but reports reaching the federal

Home Ministry indicated the strike achieved major results in only four opposition-ruled states. West Bengal in the east, and Kerala, Karnakata and Andhra Pradesh in the south were virtually parlaysed with public transport off the roads, shops and schools shut, long-distance trains cancelled and flights grounded. Trading on stock exchanges and bullion and commodity markets across India, including the country's business capital Bombay, was halted.

Home Minister Buta Singh branded the protest a "flop" in Parliament, but the sponsors called it a huge success in a joint statement released here. "The Rajiv Gandhi government unleashed severe repression against the strike's supporters," the opposition statement said. "Preventive detentions and arrests touched 150,000," it said. "Despite this the manner in which people have responded and paralysed normal activities indicate the people's determined will against the economic and political policies of the present government."

The strike's "success" was a "massive vote of no-confidence" in Mr. Gandhi's three-year-old Congress (I) Party government, said the independent Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), the strike's main sponsor. Some 40,000 opposition workers were arrested in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, which is ruled directly by the federal government, and at least 10,000 in the eastern state of Orissa, CPI-M spokesman Prakash Karat said. "Reports of arrests have been pouring in from all over," he said, but could not immediately give a detailed break-up.

A majority of the arrested opposition workers were said to be key functionaries at lower levels. Prominent leaders arrested included former Tripura chief minister Nripen Chakraborty. In the capital, nearly 1,000 opposition workers were held trying to force buses off the roads, Mr. Karat said. Police baton-charged and arrested some 40 CPI-M women activists stoning buses in New Delhi's main shopping district, witnesses said. Police confirmed about 300 arrests in Delhi, 44 held for rioting, with several district reports still awaited. [passage omitted]

"The strike is a reflection of the people's opinion," Sitaram Yachori of the CPI-M said. "It is a symbol of the prevailing mood—that this government must go." Observers have seen the action as a popularity test for the traditionally fragmented opposition, which is trying to forge unity in a bid to offer a credible alternative to Mr. Gandhi's Congress (I). The opposition charges the government with corruption in a 1.3-billion-dollar defence deal with the Swedish arms firm Bofors, failure to halt Sikh separatist killings in the Punjab and to stem inflation.

Strike in Public Sector Fails

BK151613 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Near normal functioning has been reported in most of the public sector units on the second day of the 3-day strike called by some employees unions. Banking operations were more or less normal in all states except West Bengal and some pockets in Kerala, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, and Orissa. The major unions of the State Bank of India, State Bank of Saurashtra, Indian Overseas Bank, and Bank of Baroda are not observing the strike. Civil aviation operations were almost normal despite the strike. Indian Airlines operated all its scheduled services from Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Hyderabad, and Bangalore. The services from Calcutta were affected. Vayudut and Air India services were normal.

In the steel sector the worst affected plants were Durgapur and Rourkela. However, attendance in Bhilai Steel Plant today was above normal. In the coal sector, attendance in various coal fields ranged beoween 50 to 75 percent. The government has, meanwhile, issued orders under the Essential Services Maintenance Act banning strikes in any service in the coal-producing companies of Coal India Limited. Similar orders are already in force in the mines and establishments of the Singrauni collieries.

According to official sources oil production activity in ONGC [Oil and natural Gas Corporation] and Indian Oil Corporation are normal. There were some sporadic picketing in the northeastern region. Refineries are also functioning with officers carrying out the operations wherever necessary. In the power sector, NTPC [National Thermal Power Corporation] and other public sector units functioned normally today. In the railways an estimate till this evening says that freight movement was affected by about 50 percent. Train services were severely affected in West Bengal and Kerala.

Congress-I Condemns Strike

BK151614 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Congress-I has strongly condemned the hooliganism and vandalism by the workers of the opposition parties in some parts of the country while forcibly trying to close the shops. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi, the Congress-I general secretary, Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad, said that in Karnataka, Kerala, and West Bengal, the bundh was observed against the will of the people. He said that the opposition tried to disturb the very fiber of democracy by demanding the resignation of the democratically elected government after having failed to destabilize the country by slanderous propaganda and rumormongering.

Natwar Singh on U.S. Human Rights Report

BK160855 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0830 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] The minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, asserted in the House that India does not need any certificate from any other country for its respect for human rights. He said India is a free country with free press and anyone interested in finding the truth can do so without any difficulty. The minister was replying to several questions regarding the U.S. State

Department's report on human rights. Mr Natwar Singh said the Government of India was not involved in the preparation of the report and does not share all the assessments contained in it.

Singaporean Prime Minister Arrives for Visit
BK160529 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] The Singapore prime minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, arrived in New Delhi last night on a 3-day visit. He was received at the airport, among others, by the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, and the minister of state for home, Mr P. Chidambaram. Mr Lee is heading a 20-member delegation, which includes 3 senior ministers. He will have talks with the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, who will later host a banquet in his honor. The discussions are expected to cover bilateral relations and international issues, like Kampuchea, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and disarmament. Mr Lee will call on the president, Mr R. Venkataraman, and the vice president, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma.

Iran

WIH Communique on Continuation of War
LD151439 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] We continue this hour's news reports with the WIH communique on the continuation of the battle of the fighters of Islam until final victory.

In His exalted name. Brave and steadfast Iranian people. These days the battlefronts are witnessing the vengeful operations of your heroic and valiant children. The fighters of Islam, with the covenant they have made with you, the self-sacrificing nation, are revitalizing the battlefronts. With their repeated attacks against the criminal enemy they have achieved great and glorious gains. Through reliance on their uncompromising principles, the untiring and invincible fighters of Islam, after 8 years of battle against the enemy, still believe that the solution to the war should be sought only on the battlefronts.

Islamic ummah! Today, 8 years after the dastardly aggression of the enemy against the Islamic Republic of Iran, you have sensed the evil nature of the enemy with your skin, flesh, and blood—an enemy that carried out a savage aggression against our country in order to destroy the Islamic Revolution; that razed our cities; that violated the honor of our chaste girls in Khuzestan and buried them alive; that unashamedly attacked and has continued to attack our homes and belongings; that has used chemical weapons not only against our fighters in the battlefields, but even in our cities; that has totally ignored international laws and regulations governing wars and has even set fire to hospitals and clinics; and an enemy that not only is our enemy, but the enemy of its own people.

Today the oppressed Iraqi people are struggling under the bloody claws of the Iraqi regime. Each day we hear news of the destruction of a village or hamlet in Iraq. Each day we receive news of the chemical bombing of residential areas in the north of Iraq. Each day we are informed of the homelessness of thousands of oppressed Iraqi people. The bestiality and savagery of the Iraqi regime has reached such a point that, despite heavy news censorship, more news of its crimes reaches the outside world. Each day another aspect of the disgraced dictatorial regime ruling Baghdad becomes evident.

Under such conditions, should we submit to the crimes and ambitions of that regime? Should we wait until the enemy sets fire to our entire being? Can international organizations regain our legitimate rights for us? The experience of 8 years of war has proved to us that we should strangle the criminal aggressor with our own hands and not rest until the destruction of the enemy. In the gloomy outlook of the present world one cannot see any sign of support for the oppressed. On the contrary, everywhere one sees clear signs of support for the oppressors. In the same way that 8 years ago the UN Security Council paid no heed to justice and did not propose a fundamental solution for the ending of the war, today also it tries to shrug off its responsibility. What is the Islamic Republic of Iran asking of them? Is our request anything more than the admission of a historical fact, namely, to admit and announce the aggression of the Iraqi regime against the Islamic Iran on 22 September 1980? Is this an unjust and unprincipled request?

However, you, the Islamic ummah, are witnessing that even those organizations established to remove tension and create security are unable to admit facts, let alone take any steps to achieve our rights. Of course, the reason for all this propaganda and these vain efforts by international powers is very clear: The superpowers are the ones who are really pulling the strings, the superpowers at whose instigation the Iraqi regime started the war.

For us there is only one path to choose, namely, to continue our holy defense and our battle until the end of the aggressor's life and the establishment of lasting peace and justice in the region. It is in light of these certainties and beliefs that today the fighters of Islam are only thinking of the battlefronts and will never divert their energy and thoughts to peripheral issues. Your children, brave nation, know full well that the final words should be uttered at the battlefronts. They only retaliate against the Iraqi attacks on Iran's residential areas in order to put an end to those attacks as soon as possible because they do not wish to inflict any harm on the oppressed Iraqi people, who are themselves victims of a great and heinous crime, that of fighting against the Islamic Revolution. This is why we have always said, and we repeat, that our retaliatory operations are only in response to Iraqi attacks. Anytime the Iraqi regime stops its attacks on our cities, we also will stop our preventative measures immediately.

Oppressed Iraqi people, the calamities to which you are subjected, a long war, the loss of your children, helplessness, destruction, and homelessness, and all other calamities are due to the hegemonism, expansionism, aggressiveness, bestiality, and criminality of a regime that is headed by a bloodthirsty dictator called Saddam. It has now been 8 years since Saddam imposed the war on the two nations of Iran and Iraq. Now it is up to you to take notice of your great responsibility and to expand your struggle against the bloodthirsty Iraqi regime and endow your struggle with great depth and meaning. Turn your weapons against the criminal leaders of the Iraqi regime on the battlefronts, in the cities, in the streets and houses. Urge your children on the battlefronts to take refuge in the pure Islamic territory so that they might save themselves from a deathtrap in this world, as well as from hellfire in the next.

Now, when the fighters of Islam are advancing with an indescribable vigor in the western fronts, it the best opportunity for fleeing the grip of the executioners. O Iraqi soldiers, hurry so that you may become the guests of the Islamic Republic and start a new life.

Here, once again, we warn the leaders of the Ba'thist regime of Iraq to stop their atrocities before all the national assets of Iraq have been destroyed. If they are capable of waging a manly war on the battlefronts, they should confront our fighters so that they may be taught unforgettable lessons. Our fighters are standing firmly and they will break up the enemy ranks one after another. On the eve of the new year, they are determined to present the valiant Iranian nation with the great gift of victory.

Steadfast and martyr-nurturing Iranian ummah! With your steadfastness and resistance you are placing your lives at the disposal of your sublime goals. Remain steadfast because your children have targetted the center of corruption and savagery in the fronts and will destroy it. Today is another 'Ashura [10 Muharram, 1st month of the Islamic year, the day Imam Husayn was killed in Karbala'] and the battlefields are another Karbala', and the forces of Husayn, peace be upon him, have valiantly attacked the enemy. Life is a conviction and a struggle! [Koranic verse]

[Signed] War Information Headquarters

Missile Attacks, Ground Operations Continue

IRGC Notes Kurdish Operations

LD151805 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] The IRGC General Staff reports that the Muslim mojahedin and the Kurdish strugglers of Iraq, accompanied by support units of the 75th Zafar Brigade of the IRGC Ground Forces, have been engaged in mopping-up operations in the liberated areas of Khurmal region, during which they fired heavily on Iraqi Army positions, killing and wounding more than 550 Ba'thist mercenaries. The total for enemy casualties since the start of "Zafar-7" to date exceeds 1,155.

Continuing these victorious operations, the selfless fighters of the anti-tank units of the IRGC Ground Forces attacked the enemy's armament and equipment, setting on fire and destroying more than 110 vehicles and personnel carriers.

'Val-Fajr 10' Launched

LD160559 Tehran IRNA in English 0555 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—First stage of new operations code-named "Val-Fajr-10" (Dawn) was launched in the general sector of Khurmal in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province of Iraq. Heavy casualties and losses were inflicted on the enemy troops in the course of the operations. More details will follow shortly.

1st Stage of Operations Noted

LD160645 Tehran IRNA in English 0640 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 16, IRNA—The first stage of operations "Val-Fajr-10" was launched by combatants of the Ground Forces of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) in Khurmal region in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province of Iraq last night.

The new operations came after liberation of Khurmal heights in "Zafar-7" operations launched earlier this month in northeastern Iraq.

According to latest reports, the Muslim combatants are advancing towards their pre-determined targets deep inside Iraq from the east to the west.

Forces Take City of Khurmal

LD160906 Tehran IRNA in English 0904 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 16, IRNA—Iran's Muslim combatants victoriously entered the northeastern Iraqi town of Khurmal in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province this morning following pitch battles with Iraqi troops. Iranian combatants are shattering last resistance of the remaining Iraqi troops inside the city.

Iraqi Fortifications Bombed

LD160920 Tehran IRNA in English 0916 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters heavily bombed Iraqi fortifications in Khurmal region, northeastern Iraq three times Wednesday, inflicting substantial casualties and losses on the enemy. The fighters returned safely to bases after successfully carrying out the bombing missions which took place at 10:18, 10:25 and 10:27 hours local time (06:48, 06:55 and 06:57 GMT).

Khatem ol-Anbiya' Communique

LD161156 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Khatem ol-Anibya' Headquarters communique on the "Val-Fajr-10" operations, issued 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Muhammad, the apostle of God, and his followers are harsh with infidels and kind with each other. O heroic ummah of Islam! O noble and steadfast nation of Iran! Simultaneous with the auspicious anniversary of the mission of the noble prophet—may God's salutations and benedictions be upon him and his scion—your zealous and committed sons, relying on Almighty God's assistance and succor, launched the first phase of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations at 2320 last night under the holy codename "O apostle of God, O apostle of God, O apostle of God" [Ya Rasullah, Ya Rasullah, Ya Rasullah], 30 km deep inside Iraqi territory in the Khurmal region.

In the course of these operations, which were launched in retaliation for the enemy's atrocities in attacking our country's residential areas and in order to destroy the war machine of the criminal enemy and liberate another Kurdish-inhabited area of Iraq's Al-Sulaymaniyah Province, the courageous warriors of the IRGC Ground Forces, following the liberation of the heights between Khurmal and the border strip during the "Zafar-7" operations, succeeded in launching a two-pronged surprise attack on the positions, bases, and fortifications of the Iraqi Ba'th Army east and west and north and south of Khurmal. After crossing some natural and enemy-built obstacles, our forces took full control of dozens of villages in the north, south, and west of Khurmal.

Among the villages liberated within the first hours of these operations were: (Mir-Sour), (Gachena Bala), (Gachena Pa'in), (Nabi), (Dara Golan), (Ahmad Fathi Karam), (Kutak Pichu), (Amure-Kenare), (Rustam-Bag), (Taza Deh), (Shir-e Mar Muhammad Farraj), (Gilak, Dajwan), (Garnaf), (Hani Din), (Hani Garmala), (Kani Nabi), and (Sarjad).

Your mighty warriors, the zealous ummah, who were enjoying the support of fire of different units of the airborne division of the Islamic Republic's Armed Forces and powerful artillery fire of the fighters of Islam, after an intense battle with the feeble enemy, this afternoon succeeded in crushing the last ditch resistance of the Iraqi Ba'thist mercenaries, whose military formation was smashed by the surprise attack of the infantry forces of the fighters of Islam, and entered the town of Khurmal.

By inflicting further heavy blows and losses on the enemy, our troops totally mopped up the strategic town of Khurmal. Thanks to the liberation of Khurmal, the area of the liberated zone in the course of the first phase of the "Val-Farj-10" operations totalled over 250 square km. During these proud operations, the 1st Battalion of the 433d Brigade was 100 percent destroyed, the 70th Armored Brigade and one commando battalion from the 1st Commando Brigade were damaged by 60-70 percent. More than 1,100 mercenary enemy troops were either killed or wounded.

In the first phase of these operations, the defenders of Islam captured countless numbers of the enemy troops, and so far 550 of them, including several officers and NCO's, have been taken behind the lines. During efforts to destroy the enemy's war machine in this phase of the operations, dozens of tanks and personnel carriers of the feeble enemy were set ablaze and destroyed, and a considerable amount of medium- and heavyweight equipment was captured intact by the fighters of Islam.

The mighty warriors of Islam are currently consolidating and strengthening their newly captured positions, and are chasing the defeated enemy in the plain west of the liberated town of Khurmal. The relentless battle of the corps of monotheism, combined with devotion and endeavors of the combat-engineering warriors of the IRGC Ground Forces and the Reconstruction Jihad, continues. Assistance comes from Almighty God alone. [Koranic verse]

[Signed] Khatem ol-Anbiya' Headquarters

WIH Statement on Khurmal

LD161207 Tehran IRNA in English 1144 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Iran's Muslim combatants by liberating the northeastern Iraqi town of Khurmal and its surrounding villages once again demonstrated their firm resolve to continue their sacred defence until ultimate victory, said a statement here today.

The statement released by the War Information Headquarters described the victorious "Val-Fajr-10" operations which resulted in the liberation of Khurmal town as a "decisive response" to the criminal Iraqi air and missile attacks on Iran's cities.

The WIH statement said that Iranian combatants by liberating Khurmal and nearby villages in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province proved to the world that they are able to deliver a most severe blow on the tottering regime of Iraq whenever they deem so.

The "Val-Fajr-10" operations launched in Khurmal region Tuesday night revealed not only the vulnerability of Iraqi troops throughout the battlefields but also praiseworthy power of Iran's Muslim combatants deep inside Iraq, it said.

The Islamic Republic once again announces that it has no covetous eyes on Iraqi territory and that Iranian combatants will continue to launch a string of operations deep inside Iraq until they vindicate Iran's denied rights, punish the aggressor and retaliate the criminal enemy attacks on Iranian cities, it said.

The WIH statement also called on all Iraqi Mojahedin to use the favorable conditions provided by Iranian combatants and escalate their anti-Ba'thist regime guerrilla warfare. It also urged Iraqi troops to surrender themselves to Iranian forces immediateiy in order to be immune.

Iraqi Casualties Total 1,150

LD161051 Tehran IRNA in English 1045 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—The Baghdad forces suffered 550 more casualties in the continuation of the victorious "Zafar-7" operations carried out by the Iraqi Muslim Mojahedid and Kurdish strugglers backed by the Zafar Brigade 75 of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Forces in the Khurmal operational region, in the Al-Sulaymaniyah Province of Iraq Tuesday. This brought to over 1,150 the number of enemy casualties in the successful operations started early Sunday.

In these victorious operations, heavy fire of the IRGC's anti-armoured units also destroyed more than 110 Iraqi personnel carriers and vehicles, and the liberated areas in the Khurmal region were cleared from the remaining enemy.

Communique No 3,142

LD151638 Tehran IRNA in English 1632 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 15, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters heavily bombed Iraqi positions and troop concentration sites in Al-'Amarah and Zobeydah and economic and military centers of Qal'at Dizah and Raniyah Tuesday, inflicting considerable casualties and losses on the enemy, said a military communique here today.

The 3142nd joint staff communique said that all fighters returned safely to bases after successfully carrying out the bombing missions which took place at 08:55, 09:20, 09:59, 10:00 10:01, 11:50 and 12:50 hours local time (05:25, 05:50, 06:29, 06:30, 06:31, 08:20 and 09:20 GMT).

In the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's naval gunboats intercepted and inspected seven cargo ships and oil tankers Monday but allowed them to continue voyage after making certain they were not carrying cargo for the Iraqi regime.

The Islamic Republic Air Force provided cover to the Navy by carrying out reconnaissance flights over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman yesterday.

On the war fronts Monday, exchange of artillery and mortar fire continued throughout the battlefields raging somewhat more heavily in Kushk, Shalamcheh and Majnun Islands, southern fronts, where Iraqi troops sustained heavy losses in men and equipment.

Iranian Gendarmerie forces traded artillery and mortar fire with enemy troops in parts of the southern and western sectors yesterday, killing a number of Ba'thist soldiers and inflicting heavy losses on them.

An Iranian patrol convoy infiltrated enemy positions in a southern war theater Monday, attacking Ba'thist troops and inflicting several casualties on them before returning safely to bases.

Heavy fire of Iran's Muslim combatants inflicted great losses on Iraqi tank squadrons in Panjwin and Nahr 'Anbar, northwestern and western fronts Monday, concluded the communique.

Retaliatory Bombings on Iraq

LD151820 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] In response to the criminal attacks of the mercenary Iraqi regime against the residential areas of our country, the courageous and pride-inspiring pilots of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran today conducted 21 operations against Iraqi positions, fortifications, and military and economic installations in various Iraqi cities.

An operational Air Force commander, speaking in an interview with our reporter, said that the extra-territorial operations, which began at 0855 today with the bombing of the positions of enemy (?ground) forces in the southern part of the country, continued until 1815. He added that at 0857, 0930, 1030, 1035, 1150, 1158, 1253, 1322, 1430, 1449, 1545, 1640, 1805 1810, and 1815, the positions of the forces of the criminal enemy were bombed in the western part of the country, and heavy losses were inflicted on them.

Also, at 0920 and 1000 enemy positions in the Al-'Amarah and Al-Zubaydiyah operational sectors, and at 0959 and 1000 military and economic installations of the cities of Qal'at Dizah and Raniyah in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province were heavily bombed by the fighter-bombers of the army of Islam.

Further in the interview, the operational commander said that the brave pilots, after completing all the missions assigned to them, returned safely to base.

Damage From Missiles Assessed

LD151834 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Tet] This afternoon the Zionist Iraqi regime, continuing its barbaric attacks against our country's residential areas, attacked the cities of Orumiyeh, Islamabad, Masjed-e Soleyman, Shushtar, the Tazeh-Abad area and the Siyah-Sakht village in the district of Rasht and also the village of Cheshmeh Sefid in Bakhtaran District and bombed the residential areas of these cities.

This afternoon the Zionist enemy launched conducted missile attacks against the city of Tehran on several occasions, as a result of which a number of our compatriots were martyred and wounded and some houses were damaged.

The aircraft attacks of the aggressor Iraqi regime against the cities of Hamadan, Khorramabad, Alashtar, Zanjan, Khomeyn, Sazak, Ilam, and Dezful, during last night and today, martyred 51 of our compatriots, wounded several others, and damaged some houses, one school, one mosque and two hospitals.

On the basis of this report, 15 of these martyrs resulted from the enemy's savage attack this morning on a primary school in Alashtar in Lorestan Province. Also, in the savage attacks of the Iraqi warmongering regime against the resistant city of Orumiyeh this afternoon, at least 20 of our compatriots were martyred and a group of them were injured and a number of houses, educational and health establishments received some damage, and several cars were destroyed.

Missile Targets in Iraq Named

LD160648 Tehran IRNA in English 0645 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Jet fighters of the Islamic Republic Air Force heavily pounded enemy eco-military installations in Iraqi cities of Irbil, Kirkuk, and Kurak Kara (in Irbil Province) at 06:40, 06:42, and 06:50 hours local time (03:10, 03:12, and 03:20 GMT) this morning.

According to the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces, the Iranian pilots returned to bases safely after inflicting heavy casualties and losses on the enemy.

The raids were in retaliation for enemy attacks on the city of Shushtar (Khuzestan Province) Tuesday as a result of which three mosques and another religious center were destroyed and four civilians were martyred.

Air Force Bombs Iraq

LD160747 Tehran IRNA in English 0745 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Air Force fighters heavily bombed enemy troop concentration sites in Faqqeh and Al-'Amarah at 08:05 and 08:20 hours local time (04:35 and 04:50 GMT) this morning. According to the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces, the Iranian fighters inflicted heavy casualties and losses on the enemy and returned to bases safely. The command said the attacks were in retaliation for enemy air raids on civilian areas in Shazand Tuesday which martyred a number of people.

Missiles Hit Residential Areas

LD160918 Tehran IRNA in English 0900 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Residential areas in Tehran were subjected to Iraqi missile attacks several times this morning as a result of which a number of civilians, including women and children were martyred and wounded.

Meanwhile, Iraqi planes bombed civilian areas in Tabriz, Bakhtaran, Orumiyeh, Salmas (W. Azarbayjan Prov.), and Chadegan and Daran (in Esfahan Province) this morning. Scores of civilians including many women and children were martyred and wounded in these attacks. Several residential quarters were also razed in enemy missile and air attacks.

In retaliation for Tuesday's enemy attacks on Iran's civilian quarters including an air raid on a school in Alashtar in Lorestan Province which martyred 25 students and school officials, Iran unleashed four surface-to-surface missiles against four military centers in Baghdad at 01:45, 01:47, 2:18, and 02:20 hours local time Wednesday (22:15, 22:17, 22:48, 22:50 GMT Tuesday).

An IRGC statement said Iran's retaliatory attacks will decisively continue until enemy stops its desperate attacks on civilians.

52 Die in Missile Attacks

LD161112 Tehran IRNA in English 1102 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Some 52 civilians were martyred and scores of others wounded in Wednesday's Iraqi missile attacks on Tehran and enemy bombing of the cities of Bakhtaran, Orumiyeh, Daran, Tabriz, Chadegan and Salmas. Damage was also inflicted on houses, public places and vehicles.

IRGC Fires Missile at Baghdad

LD161023 Tehran IRNA in English 1018 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Another Iranian surface-to-surface missile was fired at a military center in Baghdad at 12:52 hours local time (09:22 GMT) Wednesday in revenge for the ongoing Iraqi missile and air attacks on Iran's cities. The missile was fired by the Missile Unit of the Air Force of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC).

9 Missiles Fired at Basra

LD161027 Tehran IRNA in English 1016 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Nine Iranian surface-to-surface missiles were fired at economic and military centers of the Iraqi city of Al-Nashwah and Soeib [name as received] canal in Basra Wednesday in revenge for the continued Iraqi attacks on Iran's cities, said a military statement here today.

The statement released by the central headquarters of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) added that Iranian long-range artillery continued pounding a refinery and a radio-T.V. station in Basra and other enemy economic and military centers in Basra, Al-Haritha, Al-Zubayr, Al-'Aziz, Al-Qurnah and Qal'at Salih today.

Shiraz Hospital Bombed

LD161113 Tehran IRNA in English 1104 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Shiraz, Fars Prov., March 16, IRNA—Residential areas and a hospital here were bombed by Iraqi warplanes Wednesday as a result of which several civilians were martyred and wounded. There is yet no report on the exact number of casualties.

IRGC Spokesman on Operations, IRGC Day

LD151336 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] During an interview on the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-3" operations launched by the fighters of Islam, Mr Afshar [IRGC spokesman] said: These operations, which followed the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-2" and "Zafar-7" operations, inflicted heavy blows on the Iraqi Zionist regime and were a tooth-shattering answer to Saddam's aggressions against our country's cities and residential areas.

Referring to the countrywide dispatch of His Holiness Imam Husayn Corps—peace be upon him—in the month of Farvardin next year [21 March to 20 April 1988], the IRGC spokesman stressed the need for the speedy registration of the trained forces at IRGC and mobilization centers on the basis of a prearranged timetable. He said: So far, 20,000 fighters have been appointed in order to fill command posts of the combat units. They will be dispatched later under an independent timetable in the Malek-e Ashtar forces. The first term of training for the Malek-e Ashtar forces began last week.

Referring to the achievements of the IRGC's three forces—the ground, naval, and air forces—last year in confronting the forces of the Iraqi Zionist regime and its supporters on various fronts, he said: In addition to the achievements of the three forces, IRGC bases all over the country have performed their tasks in expanding and strengthening the 20-million-strong army, the supply of forces required at the battlefronts, and the maintenance of security in the country. There have been extensive activities in self-sufficiency in the war affairs, which on the one hand saves some foreign currency, and on the other, by creating employment, assists the country's economy. Among these achievements one could mention the manufacture of TOW missiles, other sophisticated military equipment, and planes.

In conclusion, Mr Afshar explained the programs for the third of Shaban [22 March], the birthday anniversary of His Holiness Imam Husayn—peace be upon him—which is named Guards Day. He said: The Guards Day programs include commentaries on IRGC activities in the mass media; sports competitions; the commemoration of IRGC members in the global revolution of Islam, such as martyr Khalid Islambuli and martyr Shaykh Raghib Harb; visiting the injured in hospitals; and special celebrations for the birthday of His Holiness Imam Husayn—peace be upon him.

Velayati Assails 'Silence' on Missile Attacks

LD151843 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Report on address delivered by Foreign Minister Velayati to a meeting of ambassadors, charges d'affaires, and heads of foreign missions in the Islamic Republic; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] Mr Velayati, minister of foreign affairs, attended a meeting of the ambassadors, charges d'affaires, and heads of foreign missions to the Islamic Republic of Iran and described the latest crimes of the Zionist Iraqi regime in attacking cities and other civilian areas of Iran. He said: This is the fifth time that the aggressor Iraqi regime has attacked Iranian civilian areas and cities. He added: A look at the history of the imposed war and the black record of the regime ruling over Iraq clearly shows that the nature of the Baghdad rulers is determined by inhuman and barbaric actions. However, the silence on the part of international circles and governments who claim to be champions of peace and humanity with respect to such crimes is very surprising.

He added: Our people and world public opinion have the right to ask why international circles, the many international organizations, and those defending human rights, together with the societies who claim to be supporters of peace, have suddenly withdrawn into their shells and why nothing can be heard from them following the latest Iraqi aggressions and the bloodying of newborn babies, pregnant women, schoolchildren, and the sick. They have the right to ask themselves why the proposal in the Security Council raising the issue of Iraqi attacks against Iranian cities was opposed by some members of the council and viewed with disinterest by the rest.

Mr Velayati continued by saying: The policy of retaliation by the Islamic Republic in order to end the aggressions and the crimes has so far been the main foundation of our action. There is no doubt that the crushing retaliatory blows of the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue this time until the complete ending of Iraqi attacks against civilian, residential, and economic targets in our homeland. In addition, the extension of the level of aggressions and crimes of the Iraqi regime reaffirms the steadfast position of the Islamic Republic of Iran that the only way an end to the war imposed by Iraq against the Islamic Republic of Iran is through the implementation of justice, obtaining the just rights of the Muslim Iranian nation, and the punishment of the warmongering and aggressor regime of Saddam.

He went on to add: The silence maintained by the Security Council and the United Nations in the face of the crimes of the Iraqi regime has again proven that all statements and resolutions issued by this organization are for the benefit of the superpowers and the supporters of the aggressor regime and cannot ensure peace, stability, and security in our very important and strategic region. He referred to the support by the superpowers and the weapons and missiles given to the Iraqi regime to attack Iranian cities and said: Such issues will not be ignored by our Muslim nation.

In conclusion, he reaffirmed the great determination of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in pursuing its policy for justice and said: The condemnation of the crimes of the Iraqi regime is a serious and fundamental duty for all governments that champion human rights and is based on international norms. Naturally, we expect your respective governments to condemn such actions, thus paying their debt to society as silence in the face of human rights deprivations and clear violations of international law will have very grave consequences for international peace and security, as well as the future of humanity.

Musavi Interviewed on Cities' War, USSR

OW160039 Tokyo KYODO in English 0011 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16 KYODO—Iranian Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi said Tuesday that the war of cities with Iraq will go on. "That is why we are continuing the construction of (bomb) shelters," Musavi said in an interview with KYODO NEWS SERVICE. The interview took place at the prime minister's office in downtown Tehran while the capital was under another round of missile attacks from Iraq.

Tehran radio said Iraqi air raids killed over 70 people in more than a dozen cities on Tuesday and reported heavy retaliatory attacks with bombs, missiles and artillery in the "war of the cities," now in its third week.

"We think the city war will probably continue," Musavi said in commenting on Iranian efforts to build more bomb shelters in the city.

Musavi, however, warned of "a firm retaliation" if Iraq does not stop its missile attacks.

Musavi reiterated Iran's position that any solution to end the eight-year-old Gulf War "will be useless" unless Iraqi President Saddam Husayn is punished. Iran accuses Husayn of starting the war, tearing up a 1975 agreement setting common borders between the two countries.

Musavi said Iran will not bend under international pressure to seek a peace settlement with Iraq, even at the risk of an arms embargo and trade sanctions.

"There are those who think that it is possible [to] force us into retreating from our principles," he said. "This is a false deduction." He warned an international arms embargo and trade sanctions will only "radicalize our policies."

Musavi criticized the Soviet Union for supplying Iraq with missiles used in attacks on Iranian cities. "The use of Soviet-made missiles on Tehran has annoyed our people," he said, noting that this has strained Iranian-Soviet relations.

Musavi said he sees "no hope for any kind of relations between Iran and the United States in the near or distant future because of the action that the U.S. is taking against our revolution." As examples he cited U.S. involvement in the Persian Gulf crisis and efforts to impose an arms embargo on Iran in the Security Council of the United Nations.

"All these actions," he said, "show that the U.S. has not stopped its aggressive and hostile actions against the Islamic Republic."

'Expert' Explains Iraqi Missile Types

LD131530 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0740 GMT 13 Mar 88

[Text] [Announcer] News agencies during the past week have generally covered material on the type and destructive powers of the missiles used by Saddam's criminal regime. We have raised the point with an expert in the missile manufacturing industry:

[Unidentified expert] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With greetings to the imam of ummah and the ummah. I will say something briefly on the Iraqi missiles.

It has been said that these new missiles, named Al-Husayn, are manufactured by the Iraqis. However, the capability of the Iraqi missiles manufacturing setup might at best be able to manufacture missiles such as we normally hear about in the news. They are known as Katyushas. They have made several efforts in this area but they are still in the experimental phase.

The missiles which they have used are most definitely Russian-made. The only thing the Iraqis have done is to make some changes so that they can reach Tehran. As far as precision is concerned, one must say that they are very inferior. In order to pinpoint their target they probably have to use 100 or 200 missiles in order to be certain of hitting a designated target. Of course, this is not a very precise calculation, but that is how it is.

The missiles fired were of the type that Iraq once used. Missiles are complicated things; they have guidance systems. If one intends to meddle in one part then one must have a high level of expertise in order to adjust the other parts in order to have it function properly. That is why we say most definitely that nobody in Iraq can do this, unless they use missile experts, and such experts definitely are in the countries manufacturing missiles.

[Announcer] Please tell us what differences are there between missiles fired at Tehran and those fired at the resisting town of Dezful.

[Expert] We must say that missiles fired at Dezful, numbering some 180 in all, had a destructive power four times more than those fired at Tehran. That is, the equivalent of something like 720 or more missiles have been fired at Dezful, which the resisting and martyr-nurturing people of Dezful endured. Yet, the Iraqis did not achieve anything. They did not make the slightest psychological impact. The psychological impact of the present attacks is less than Iraq could achieve in the previous round of the war of the cities. This is because of the high morale of our people in all areas. [end recording]

IRGC Ministry's Industries Test First APC

LD151143 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] The first armored personnel carrier [APC] manufactured by the self-sufficiency industries of the IRGC Ministry, named Boraq, has been tested and will be mass produced soon. The vehicle can move easily in the sandy areas of the southern regions as well as the mountainous areas in the western parts of the country. It is also capable of moving at speed in water. Various types of medium-weight weapons, including 50-caliber guns and 120-mm mortars, can be mounted on the vehicle.

Commentary on U.S., UN Positions on War

LD151553 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1109 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Station commentary: "Our Nation Will Not Hesitate for One Moment To Crush the Ba'thist Regime of Iraq"]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. As reported in the news last night and today, the criminal regime of Iraq, having received the green light from and being guided by the superpowers, subjected the residential areas of Tehran and a number of other towns to air and missile attacks.

At this point, we do not wish to go into who supplied and are supplying that regime with missiles, or who gave the orders for the missiles to be fired. For those who secretly and overtly arm and encourage the 'Aflaqi regime to resort to criminal attacks against the Muslim Iranian nation are well known to our nation. What we want to talk about here are the motives driving the enemy to these criminal attacks and the aims of hegemonist powers at this stage of their conspiracies. [passage omitted]

Among the conspiracies of the past several years by those powers supporting the Iraqi regime against the Islamic Revolution of Iran, the latest conspiracy, the conspiracy of missile attacks on Tehran, possesses special characteristics. This conspiracy has special dimensions, not from the standpoint of missile attacks on Tehran, but from the standpoint of its relation to the sum total of other actions and reactions at the global and regional levels. The planners of the Security Council, that is powers who are bullies, are in the process of enacting a scenario within the framework of a completely U.S.-sponsored project. They think that the fate of the war and the region is tied to this scenario, which, like former projects, has only one aim: to prevent the downfall of the Iraqi Ba'th Party. However, the ways in which this project is implemented—owing to the extension of its dimensions and of the investments made by big powers in its implementation—give it special characteristics as compared with previous projects, or rather, conspiracies.

The scenario has been formulated very carefully. An arena named the United Nations, which should have international and peace-seeking credibility and reputation, has been chosen as the stage. The Security Council also, which should be a body that maintains security all over the world, acts as the higher executor of this project. Having prepared the groundwork, the United States took the first step and proposed Resolution No 598. The Security Council then passed this resolution, the contents of which were formulated and arranged with subtlety. The order of the contents of this resolution is such that in case the Islamic Republic of Iran accepts it, it will mean leaving untouched a criminal enemy, that is, a regime that has ruined Iranian cities for several years and has never refrained from committing any kind of crime against the people of Iran. It means that Iran should wait for international assemblies to identify the aggressor, in accordance with their regulations, which are solely geared to serving the interests of the United States and hegemonistic powers.

This means that the aggressor will escape punishment, the same goal of preventing the downfall of the Ba'thist regime ruling Iraq. What is interesting is that simultaneously with the passage of this resolution, the United States hastily entered the Persian Gulf arena so that, by pressuring the Islamic Republic of Iran, it imagined that it could force the resistant people of Iran to surrender. Once the defeat of the strategy of the great Satan in the Persian Gulf was exposed, it was seen that this time the United States and its followers would perform another act of the scenario. Yet, shortly after the defeat of the U.S. endeavors to push forward its objectives via the dispatch of forces to the Persian Gulf, the insane attacks of the Zionists ruling over Baghdad, against the residential areas of Tehran and other cities, began again. The Iraqi regime impudently claimed that it would continue its missile attacks against Tehran and other cities to the point that Iran would agree to Resolution No 598.

The question to be asked the Security Council is this: If Resolution No 598 is a just solution for ending the war, then why has the Iraqi regime—which itself is on one side of the war—welcomed it so warmly and why is it ready to commit any kind of crime in order to make the resolution acceptable—noting the order in which the contents are arranged has left some room for the Iraqi regime to get itself out of the rut in which it has placed itself? Does this not bring home the point that the Security Council acts to serve the United States and support the criminal regime of Iraq? [passage omitted]

We repeat without any hesitation that the only way to peace is the realization of a just solution, which means the naming of the aggressor and determining what punishment he deserves. We warn the masters of Saddam about the spread of the war in the Persian Gulf and other areas in the region. We declare that any kind of incitement in this connection will cause the flames of war to spread to all over the region. The United States should know that its puppets in the region, who face a self-sacrificing nation, are very vulnerable.

Bank Delegation Returns From Tunisia

LD121647 Tehran IRNA in English 1552 GMT 12 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 12, IRNA—An Iranian delegation, which participated in the 12th annual session of the board of trustees of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) in Tunisia, returned home Friday night.

The delegation informed the IDB of Iran's decision to be a full-fledged member. The session decided to study Iran's request at the next annual meet of the IDB board of trustees to be held in Jiddah, Hijaz.

The Iranian delegation from the Finance and Economic Affairs Ministry, accompanied by Foreign Ministry officials, took part in the aforesaid meeting held from March 7-9.

Velayati Receives Algerian Foreign Official

LD121749 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 12 Mar 88

[Text] A director general of the Algerian Foreign Affairs Ministry presently in Tehran was received by Foreign Affairs Minister Velayati this morning. He delivered a note from Algerian Foreign Affairs Minister Ahmad Taleb Ibrahimi.

At the meeting bilateral relations, regional issues, and the imposed war were discussed. Velayati expressed pleasure at the expanding bilateral relations and desirable and fruitful cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Algeria as two revolutionary and Islamic countries. He commented on the imposed war and the recent misdeeds of the aggressor Iraqi regime and said: These acts by the Iraqis once again show that the Iraqi regime is the aggressor and is untrustworthy. It also proves that the regime is never bound by any humanitarian or international norms.

Velayati added: Algeria, as the host for the 1975 accord between the late shah of Iran and Saddam Husayn of Iraq, is well aware of how Iraq trampled on the accord. We hoped at the time that Iraq would be approached by Algeria and all international bodies. In conclusion, the foreign minister affirmed: The position taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran on the imposed war is still principled and still holds. Announcing the aggressor and punishing the same will always be part of our unchangeable conditions.

Foreign Ministry Official Visits Suriname

For IRNA reportage on the visit to Suriname by 'Ali Ahani, Foreign Ministry director general for Europe and America, including his meetings with Surinamese President Ramsewak Shankar and Prime Minister Henk Arron, see the Suriname subsection of the South America section of the 16 March Latin America DAILY REPORT.

Sri Lanka

Jayewardene Examines War on Terrorism

BK141145 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] President Jayewardene said yesterday the only aim of the terrorists is to destroy the democratic process of the country. He added that they believed in dangerous weapons such as bombs and rifles. The president said that the government's responsibility is to stop these violent activities. President Jayewardene was speaking at the opening ceremony of the new Sangha Vasu Mandiriya of the Paiyagala-Pottuvil Sri Surya Bandara Rajmandra Sundara Purana Vihara [Buddhist religious site] this afternoon. President Jayewardene requested the assistance of the public to combat terrorism.

Addressing the gathering, President Jayewardene said that the Sinhala nation had to face various problems 200 to 300 years ago. The terrorists in the north, east, and the south are trying to destroy the democratic process in the country. He added that the government has taken every possible step to [deal with] terrorist activities in the north and the east with assistance of the Indian Government. The Sri Lankan troops have been deployed in the southern parts of the island as the Indian troops are conducting operations in the northern and eastern areas.

The president said that Sri Lanka is now in a winning position in the war against terrorism. The president recalled that he has given his fullest support as leader of the opposition to combat terrorist activities during the 1971 insurgency. He said that some failed to offer their assistance during the present crisis.

13 Tamils Pulled Off Bus, Shot Dead

BK151251 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] In Sri Lanka, 22 people have been killed in violent incidents since last evening. Thirteen Tamils were shot dead this morning when the bus in which they were traveling was attacked by unknown gunmen at Tampalakaman, 30 kilometers southwest of Trincomalee. Our correspondent Plabon Majumder reports the passengers were pulled out of the bus and were shot at random. This is an apparent retaliation to the killing of 12 Sinhalese civilians by the LTTE in a nearby village yesterday.

Indian Embassy Corrects Report

BK151322 Hong Kong AFP in English 1311 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Colombo, March 15 (AFP)—Thirteen Tamils were attacked, not killed in eastern Sri Lanka Tuesday, the Indian High Commission (embassy) here said, correcting an earlier statement. A high commission spokeswoman told reporters that the commission was "correcting itself" following an earlier statement that armed men had dragged 13 Tamils off a bus in Trincomalee district and shot them dead. "We thought they had been killed, but we came to know just now that some Tamil bus passengers were only attacked," the spokesman told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE.

5-Day Tamil Strike Begins in Jaffna

BK151306 Hong Kong AFP in English 1038 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Colombo, March 15 (AFP)—A strike called by Tamil militants paralysed the northern town of Jaffna Tuesday, reports from the area said. Shops and schools were closed as the five-day general strike got underway to demand talks between India and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the dominant Tamil separatist group, the reports said. There were no reports of violence. LTTE posters Monday appeared all over Jaffna, a rebel stronghold until it was seized by Indian troops in late October, asking Tamils to join the strike, local correspondents said by telephone. "Life is paralysed here," a Tamil reporter said. "Everything is shut and Indian soldiers are all over." [passage omitted]